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Editor's Shop Talk

■ We don't think we're giving away a trade secret if we reveal that the editors of this journal are sometimes almost as surprised as the readers by the contents of each issue. Perhaps it is different in the journalism empires where people are not only expected to think about the contents of their publications during most of their waking hours but are actually paid for doing so. The members of our editorial board are paid to teach, and any playing around with magazines is purely avocational. They read manuscripts (often at odd hours of the night) and gather to discuss and choose from the current submissions those which will be published. Except for an occasional job of proofreading, they then tend to forget about the accepted stories and articles in the press of new business, avocational or otherwise—all but the one editor, that is, whose mission it is to back up and follow through this process with correspondence, typesetting arrangements, and fitting the pieces together into a completed issue.

And it is that completed issue that sometimes holds the surprises Who would have thought, for instance, that this present issue would turn out to be a Foreign Policy Number? Certainly not the editors two months ago. Nor did we expect it to be a Discussion Number, which it also seems to be But two important pieces showed up at the same time. William G. Carleton (page 5) appeals for a break in the seeming stalemate of our foreign policy thinking, appealing for executive leadership, fresh examinations of world situations, rational

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evaluations of our positions. And as if in answer to this appeal, Howard Zinn (page 39) cuts through the frozen emotional attitude toward one sector of our foreign policy for "Another Look at the Chinese Communists." Both pieces struck us as important and stimulating enough to provoke immediate discussion, which we publish following each article.

It would be nice to think that all our issues were the result of careful planning, judicious solicitation, and delicate balancing of topic and style. But it just isn't so. If the results are happy, we hope it doesn't demolish any cherished journalistic illusions. We imagine it still is possible to edit by plan.

■ A word about our two commentators in this issue: Paul Bixler has been an editor of the *Review* since Volume I, Number 1, but he makes his living as Librarian of Antioch College. Jackson H. Bailey teaches history at Earlham College and is Director of the Earlham-Antioch Cooperative Program in Non-Western Studies, which he describes in a recent article in the *Journal of Liberal Education*. His studies in East Asian history have included five years of residence in the East, and he has published articles in the specialized magazines in this field.

■ While on the subject of planning magazines in advance, meticulous readers of this column may recall that in the last issue we announced for this issue a roundup of articles on the impact of America abroad. Meticulous readers of this issue will note that it contains no such thing. The plan was not abandoned, merely deferred—partly because of delay in hearing from correspondents abroad, partly because we did not want to postpone publication of these foreign policy articles.

Barring further editorial surprises, the next issue *will* concern itself with "The Americanization of Europe." Among the contributors are Judson Jerome and M. L. Rosenthal, Americans recently returned from residence abroad, and Richard N. Parkinson and Claude Fohlen, Europeans who have observed us as foreigners in their countries.

Throwing experience and caution to the winds to look even farther ahead, we plan to discuss "After Analysis, What?" in the Fall issue. Whether because the world is too much with us or because of a suspicion among scholars that they are not with it, there has been a recent growing involvement in social concerns on the part of scholars. This can be seen in many areas, from the literary critics to the theoretical physicists, and we intend to gather a spectrum of reports from scholars who feel the need of wider participation in human concerns than their own specialties seem to demand. P.H.R.

World Crisis and the Eroding of American Democracy

By WILLIAM G. CARLETON

■ What has happened to democratic discussion of the over-riding concern of our time—American foreign policy? Is it withering away? If so, what are the consequences?

In the past, Americans have not paid much attention to the doctrine that the making of foreign policy is for a political élite, and they have discussed foreign affairs in democratic fashion. Americans animatedly debated the issues of war or peace prior to the War of 1812, prior to the Mexican War, and prior to American participation in World War I and World War II. Even in the midst of the Civil War, Americans turned the Presidential election into a contest on the issue of peace or continued war with the Confederacy. In his famous post-victory address, Lincoln heralded as of most far-reaching significance the fact that in the midst of bitter war the loyal states could hold a peaceful election and debate the great questions in a democratic way. The peace settlement of 1899 following the Spanish-American War and the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 and 1920 were heatedly debated at the grass roots. As late as the 1940's, Americans vigorously debated the Marshall Plan and even the number of military units to be stationed in Germany.

In Canada and Britain the practice of debating foreign policy

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WILLIAM G. CARLETON retired from teaching political science at the University of Florida last year and is now one of the youngest and busiest professors emeriti in the country, writing, lecturing, and traveling widely. He is also carrying on research in the history of American political parties under a Social Science Research Council grant and is revising and enlarging his Random House book, *The Revolution in American Foreign Policy*.

survives today in full force. One has only to travel the short distance from Buffalo to Toronto to be struck by an atmosphere and a tone of the press different from those in the United States. In Britain the quality press—left, right, and center—is more relaxed, flexible, and, I think, more realistic than our own quality newspapers. There seems to be a more sensitive awareness than in the United States of the pluralism and diversity of the contemporary world and of the variety of approaches to foreign policy. A recent Gallup poll revealed that a larger number of West Germans than Americans believe that the Berlin question is susceptible of peaceful solution.

With the Korean War came an abrupt decline in the vital discussion of foreign policy by Americans. That war, too, foreclosed any flexibility of policy or debate with respect to Red China. During the tenure of Secretary of State Dulles, the public was conditioned to react to any changes in the territorial status-quo as "appeasement," without regard to the intrinsic value of the places involved or the advantages we might gain in the bargaining. The Eisenhower Administration discouraged discussion and debate and encouraged the public to put its trust in managerial techniques and Presidential magic. With the coming of the Kennedy Administration, it was expected in many quarters that a new departure in foreign policy would be formulated and publicly debated. However, while Kennedy has put more emphasis on economic and social programs for the underdeveloped peoples than his predecessor, there is apparently the same Dulles inflexibility with respect to attempting to work out a pragmatic *modus vivendi* with Red China or even the Soviet Union, and unmistakably there is a carry-over of the cult of Presidential personality and faith in administrators and experts.

American opinion is becoming increasingly stereotyped and rigid. New and alternative proposals for resolving the specific points of conflict between East and West are not forthcoming or, if they are, are not publicly presented and debated. A self-imposed totalitarianism seems to be descending over the country. During an acute crisis, the over-riding attitude appears to boil down to this: Stand pat, make absolutely no concessions, don't compromise, and convince the Communists that we will fight. But in the lulls between acute crises, when we need not fear losing face and backing down under pressure, when there are calmer opportunities for proposing and debating

new alternatives for settling the outstanding differences between East and West, we are content to drift fatalistically until a new acute crisis, more terrifying than the preceding one, overtakes us.

Any discussion of Red China or of Berlin and the German question in terms of new and concrete solutions is decried as impairing national unity and inviting "appeasement." Senator Mansfield was denounced from many sides for suggesting that we might take a fresh look at the questions revolving around Berlin. When General Lucius Clay was quoted as stating that the time had come to accept the reality of the two Germanies, the resulting furor prompted him to "clarify" his remarks. Adlai Stevenson and Chester Bowles are suspect because they have "ideas." Senator Fulbright, who almost always discusses American foreign policy in terms of world realities, has been subjected to a campaign of vilification.

The leading public opinion polls test such questions as Kennedy's popularity, who is winning the Cold War, whether we would fight over Berlin, whether war over Berlin would become an all-out nuclear war, and so forth; but they steer clear of taking opinion on concrete and creative proposals for solution.

Politicians in the local, state, and congressional constituencies who attempted to discuss foreign policy in a realistically creative way would be put down as odd-balls. The local pressure groups are organized around the bread-and-butter issues, and "statesmanship" in foreign policy is now expected to come from the President and his advisers. Even veteran United States Senators who concentrate on foreign policy do so at their peril. Chairman Tom Connally of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee bowed out of the Senate rather than face the prospect of almost certain defeat back in Texas. Chairman Walter George of Georgia did the same thing, and his case is particularly significant because during most of his long career George enjoyed to an unusual degree the confidence of the power élites of his home state. If an opponent announces against Senator Fulbright, currently the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Fulbright may face a tough fight back in Arkansas.

America's intellectuals have done surprisingly little to clarify the great issues of foreign policy. Many are exponents of the New Conservatism and take a right-wing view of politics. Many political scientists have turned their backs on values and large issues and are

concentrating on behavioral techniques and election statistics. Hans J. Morgenthau and a few other specialists in international relations have valiantly sought to put foreign policy in large perspective, but many specialists in this area are bogged down in methodology. Much in vogue today is the game theory, a device for arriving at specific measures by analogy to moves in a game, an attempt to use some of the techniques of decision-making which have found a useful but limited place in military science. As Karl W. Deutsch points out, this method ignores values, assumes that human beings are single-purpose rather than multi-purpose units, and because it presupposes a static situation has not been able to cope with the factors of growth, novelty, and innovation. J. Robert Oppenheimer puts the case with more feeling: "What are we to think of a civilization which has not been able to talk about killing almost everybody except in prudential and game-theoretic terms?"

In short, at this time when foreign policy dwarfs all other questions, there has been appallingly little vital public discussion of it. The nation has turned to the President for clarification and guidance, but, as Walter Lippmann has pointed out, the President has not explained foreign policy in an expository way and he has not generated discussion.

Those issues of foreign policy which impinge on bread-and-butter questions and appeal to the pressure groups still arouse practical political interest and get thorough discussion, and hence President Kennedy's proposals for great changes in America's trade and tariff policies will be aired in democratic fashion. But because foreign economic-aid programs were never taken to the people for concrete political debate, it has required more than a decade to get adequate appropriations for this vital area of American foreign policy, and even today Americans at the grass roots are poorly informed—and not quite sold—on these programs. And those superlatively important questions involving international arms-control agreements and a rapprochement and *modus vivendi* with the Communist powers have never taken tangible shape for democratic discussion and debate.

Most Americans still think of nuclear weapons and nuclear war in an unrealistic way. During an extensive lecture tour this past Winter, I was frequently asked questions about "World War III," and it was plain from the nature of the questions that many Ameri-

cans believe such a war would be fought in much the same way that World War I and World War II were fought. There is little realization of the nightmare world we are entering, the world in which there will be many nuclear powers, including Red China, and in which it will be difficult even to identify a nuclear aggressor. Americans are prone to do nothing about the international control of nuclear weapons unless they can get fool-proof guarantees against violations, and although methods of detection and inspection are improving all the time, one hundred per cent guarantees are not yet possible. The wise views of C. P. Snow and Hans J. Morgenthau have not penetrated the population at all. Arguing that less than one hundred per cent guarantees are better than anarchy, Snow puts the case this way: "On the one side we have the certainty of disaster, on the other side a finite risk. Between a risk and a certainty, a sane man does not hesitate." And Morgenthau sums it up in this fashion: "We must choose not between absolute security and utter insecurity, but between utter insecurity and a measure of insecurity which, in view of the alternative, is tolerable." Most important, Americans think of arms-control agreements in moral rather than in political terms. They divorce this question from power politics, they refuse to see it as part of the international complex. The truth is, of course, that there can be no beginning in international arms control until there is rapprochement with the Communist powers, starting with the Soviet Union, and there can be no rapprochement until the outstanding political and territorial differences between the great powers are settled by concessions on both sides. None of these great issues is being given concrete form for discussion by Americans in practical democratic fashion.

With respect to China, conciliation is not even considered in America, and any suggestion of such a thing is met with implacable intolerance. This may prove to be one of history's greatest follies, and if tragedy ultimately strikes from that quarter, we shall not even have the psychological satisfaction of knowing that we made every effort to avert it. With respect to the Russians, we cannot be sure whether they really want settlement and if so to what extent. But of one thing we can be sure: there will never be a settlement if we ourselves become intransigent. We must throw out and keep open flexible lines of communication so that if and when the time comes

that we can effectively negotiate with the Russians, we will not let it slip by. If we ourselves do not maintain a resiliency of approach, there is no alternative to the terrors of nuclear stalemate and perhaps of war.

However, there is considerable evidence that Khrushchev wants rapprochement. If so, up to the time of the U-2 incident his was the soft sell, and after that the hard sell. And why would the Russians want to draw closer to the West? The Russian Revolution is growing older, moderating, and seems to be more and more interested in consolidating its gains and protecting and advancing its internal material achievements. Russia's new middle class—the proliferating managers, engineers, technicians, administrators, co-ordinators—and her increasingly prosperous workers seem more concerned with colorful personal living than with colorful foreign politics. There may be genuine fear in Russia of the growing might of its ambitious Red Chinese neighbor, soon to have nuclear weapons, of a nuclearized Germany, and of the appalling consequences of any general nuclear war.

What the Russians seem to want as a prerequisite of rapprochement and arms-control agreements is a recognition by the West of their actual power position in the world, particularly in Eastern and Central Europe. In the past, the great powers have usually recognized the power realities and when unwilling to do so have generally gone to war to change them.

If the West were to recognize the present western boundaries of the Soviet Union, of Poland (including the Oder-Neisse line), and of Czechoslovakia and the existence of East Germany, the Russians would be getting no more than they now have in fact. In the mutual give-and-take resolving these larger questions, the West would insist on strengthening its access to West Berlin. The *Economist* of London has pointed out that the West might derive some positive advantages from its recognition of East Germany, that the relaxing of tensions would lift the Iron Curtain much more for all the Eastern satellites and tend to enlarge their national autonomies and the personal liberties of their peoples, and that it would bring East Germany into wider contact with West Germany and other Western countries. Would such recognition alienate the West Germans? Most observers are agreed that while most West German politicians give lip service to

German reunification, the people of West Germany are contented and prosperous under present arrangements and more interested in further economic integration with the West than with national reunification.

If a settlement in Eastern and Central Europe could be worked out, the resulting relaxing of tensions would not only be good in itself but it might also lead to beginning international agreements controlling nuclear weapons. Such a settlement, too, might drive a larger wedge between Russia and Red China. And if China unreasonably refused to enter the arms-control arrangements, the way would be paved for further isolating her from the rest of the world.

Even if in the end all of these possibilities should fail to materialize and the terrifying nuclear stalemate continues, it is important that they be distilled into concrete political issues so that Americans may become better informed about foreign affairs and the various approaches to its problems. At the present time most grass-roots Americans are disposed to think of the rift between Russia and Red China as a gigantic hoax perpetrated to deceive the West. As a result, Americans may be missing priceless opportunities to aid the anti-Stalinists at the expense of the Stalinists and to encourage Russia to move still further away from Red China.

Our political leaders have not formulated concrete issues of foreign policy for popular debate, and in that absence a folk myth about world politics has been developing in America. It is essentially a right-wing myth; its plausibility is increasing the number of rightists and half-way rightists; it is proving persuasive even to many who otherwise are not rightists. That myth is this: that an International Communist Conspiracy is reducing the world to a Communist Monolith, that the Communists always win everywhere, that the Americans always lose everywhere. This myth has its origin in the development of the Russian satellites in Eastern Europe at the end of World War II, in the triumph of the Communist Revolution in China in 1949, and in the failure of America to pursue the Korean War to complete victory. Many Americans equate any indigenous collectivism or socialism with Communism, and these regard the developing mixed economies in the new nations of Asia, the Middle East, and Africa as "Communist."

This myth, of course, represents a gross distortion of the world

situation. On balance, when put in historical perspective, the Communists have been losing more often than they have been winning. At the time of the Russian Revolution in 1917, Lenin expected a Communist world revolution and the establishment of an international proletarian society. This miscarried at the end of World War I, and the Communist Revolution was confined to Russia. During World War II, the Communists, taking the lead in most of the national underground movements in the countries conquered by Hitler, expected a sweep of Communist revolution when the Nazis were driven out. But again, at the end of World War II, the Communist revolution miscarried. Today, Communism is a declining force in Western Europe, and even in France and Italy the Communist parties are growing weaker in numbers and influence. The truth is that the Communists have failed to win a single advanced industrial country.

True, Communism has a certain appeal to underdeveloped peoples because it appears to be a disciplined, self-reliant, and sure way for peoples without indigenous capital, capitalists, and technicians to get an industrial revolution in a hurry. But what is noteworthy is how few of the new nations of Asia, the Middle East, and Africa have gone Communist. These fear satellitism and the police state. They have discovered a less painful way to get a fairly rapid industrial revolution—a middle way between Communism and capitalism in which, without resort to totalitarian economics, their basic industries may be developed by their new governments with economic aid and technical assistance from the advanced industrial countries and other economic activities reserved to free enterprise. The old imperialist powers left far more Western culture among these peoples than was generally realized; with national independence actually achieved in most cases, much good will for the old governing countries is now manifesting itself; the leaders of the new nations have usually had Western educations; and even now, with the imperialist powers withdrawn, there is much more intercourse with the West than with the Communist powers.

Even where the Communists have won, it has not been in the way envisaged by Lenin. The international proletarian society does not exist. Where Communism is established, it invariably takes a national form. Communism has come to different countries at differ-

ent times and in different ways. In some countries it is the result of genuine revolution, in others it has been imposed. The various Communist countries differ from one another in history, culture, conditions, stages of revolutionary development, and degrees of Marxist "orthodoxy" or "revisionism." The rifts between Stalinists, anti-Stalinists, and Titoists are growing, and these schismatics often dislike one another more than they dislike the West. Most of the new nations emerging from colonialism have rejected all brands of Communism, and their developing economies are pragmatic mixtures of indigenous collectivism, state enterprise, private enterprise, and welfareism in varying proportions.

In short, the world is not moving to monolithism. Instead, it is moving to a new pluralism, a new diversity, much closer to Wilson's conception of a world of national self-determination than to Lenin's conception of a closely-knit proletarian internationalism. There are far more non-totalitarian economies in the world than there are totalitarian economies, and politically we are not confronted with an increasing number of Communist nations, all united, presenting a solid front to the world and threatening to over-throw the balance of power with an omnivorous, monolithic world system.

It is true that Russia and China are dangerous military powers, that Marxism as a revolutionary force is far from spent, that Communism is still making gains in some of the post-colonial areas, and that we cannot take the friendship of the underdeveloped peoples for granted and must do much more than we have been doing to aid them in their fight against mass poverty. But we are now far enough along in the twentieth century to put the revolutions of our time into historical perspective and to see that history in practice is not working out the way the high priests of Marxism predicted it would. American rightists are belatedly becoming aroused about old Marxist-Leninist prophecies that are not being borne out by the actual unfolding of events.

All of this is much more clearly understood in Britain and Western Europe than in the United States. Americans, unlike Europeans, have not been at the center of world politics until recently. Also, unlike Europeans, Americans have had little experience with conflicting ideologies at home, and abroad they have not yet learned how to distinguish them and appraise them realistically. More than

the democratic peoples of Britain and Western Europe, Americans need political leaders who will distill the great questions of world politics into concrete issues so that through political discussion and debate they can get a better "feel" for international complexities. But American political leaders have neither formulated the issues nor explained the intricacies of world politics in an expository way, and hence public discussion of foreign policy has often lacked vitality and realism.

Meantime, right-wingism and right-wing extremism have been gaining in the United States. The hard core of right-wingism goes back to die-hard opposition to the New Deal, which holds that for thirty years America has been undermining its free enterprise system and "creeping" to socialism by way of increasing government, federal centralization, the welfare and administrative state, and "the fat and bloated bureaucracy." However, rightists made little headway with this moth-eaten theme. The phenomenal growth of right-wingism in recent years must be put down to its views about foreign policy. It has emphatically embraced the stereotype that the International Communist Conspiracy is reducing the world to a monolith. It maintains that America has a "no win" foreign policy, that what is needed is an aggressive American unilateralism abroad, regardless of world opinion, the views of our allies, and the United Nations. It integrates rightist doctrine by insisting that American society is honeycombed with subversives linked to the International Communist Conspiracy, and that these have secretly engineered socialism at home and sold America out abroad. It demands a drastically "get-tough" policy with subversives at home and with the Communist countries abroad. The rapid growth of rightism and rightist extremism during the past two years is the result of Russian achievements in missiles and space, the collapse of the Paris Summit, the movement of Castro to the left, the Kennedy Administration's Cuban blunder, the new Berlin crisis, and the new emphasis on building bomb shelters, which aroused the public to the very real possibility of nuclear war.

In some ways, the importance of the extremist organizations has been underestimated. In general they are strongest in communities in the South and the Southwest, but there are communities in New England, the Middle West, and the West where they are almost as strong. There are many national extremist organizations; the John

Birch Society is only one of them. Their membership is not confined to fanatics and the lunatic fringe. Prominent professional and business men are members. A few communities in the South and the Southwest have been under a virtual John Birch or Project Alert censorship. Members bore within community organizations, dominate their programs, screen the guest speakers, and question the loyalty of those who disagree with rightist doctrines. For instance, in Pensacola in 1960 and 1961, Project Alert held classes to indoctrinate civic leaders with right-wing material prepared at right-wing Harding College in Searcy, Arkansas, set up youth groups in the schools, subjected captive audiences to right-wing speakers, controlled the programs of civic clubs, the woman's club, and the parent-teacher organizations, and left the impression that those who resisted its speakers or its methods were un-American.

However, in some ways the importance of the extremist organizations has been overestimated. It must be remembered that patrioteering excesses and serious curtailment of civil liberties have been going on in American localities since the Korean War and McCarthyism, whereas the national extremist organizations have become strong only during the last two years. The extremist organizations are not the cause of the general atmosphere of vigilance and suspicion that prevails, to a greater or lesser degree, in American communities today; they are the result of it; they exploit it, give it direction, intensify it.

And what are the excesses and curtailments that come out of this atmosphere? State legislative investigating committees probing state employees, universities, labor unions, the NAACP. Surveillance by local governments of public employees, teachers, and librarians. Vague and sweeping loyalty oaths for teachers. Teachers and librarians dismissed or failing promotion because their "Americanism" is suspect. Periodicals and books in libraries censored and textbooks banned. Laws requiring anti-Communist indoctrination in the schools, with teachers fearing the way they teach anti-Communist courses will be used to measure their orthodoxy. Professors in private colleges dismissed or under fire because wealthy donors regard them as "dangerous." The media used are investigating committees, state laws, local government ordinances and directives, vigilanteism, and above all community opinion and grass-roots pressures.

The numerical strength of the extremists or even of the confirmed right-wingers will not alone account for these excesses; in the final analysis these are made possible by the large number of semi-rightists, people who half way share the attitudes of the rightists and in specific controversies give them the benefit of the doubt. The extent of the support provided the activists by the semi-rightists fluctuates with the temperature of the Cold War.

The victims of these local excesses of the past decade, intensifying during the past two years, would doubtless exceed in number the victims of the Alien and Sedition Laws, or of Know-Nothingism, or of Palmerism, or of Ku Kluxery in the 1920's, or of McCarthyism. McCarthyism took place on the national stage and therefore it was lavishly covered by the national press. The failure to put together and tell the story of the state and local excesses of the past several years is a major reflection on American journalism, revealing its growing concentration on the national scene and its negect of the provinces.

What has been happening in the localities during the past few years represents the most prolonged period of repression and the most serious peace-time infringement of civil liberties in our history. Even so, we must not exaggerate. All of these excesses were not committed in any one state or community. Many communities escaped them, and the excesses have differed in kind, extent, and intensity from community to community. Some communities have been much more affected than others. The situation has been highly spotty. Moreover, all of this does not add up to a police state or to fascism. Even in those few communities where Birchers or Alerters exercised a virtual censorship there was no genuine fascism, among other reasons because these communities could not isolate themselves from the general American society.

The extremist organizations have probably reached the peak of their influence. Their extravagances and absurdities are now being exposed. Barring an especially acute international crisis, from now on they will probably decline. But we must beware of reading too much into this, for while it seems that extremist organizations are on the wane, there is no evidence that right-wingism is declining. Indeed, freed from the embarrassments of the extremists, right-wingism may grow, especally in the suburban metropolitan areas. And

curiously enough, as the extremists decline the right-wingers who recognized them as an embarrassment and helped to discredit them—people such as Senator Goldwater and William F. Buckley, Jr. of the *National Review*—are emerging with increased stature. Politicians and publicists who are grotesquely reactionary and, as in Buckley's case, have revealed themselves as avowed enemies of many aspects of our open society are now becoming "respectable," even among moderates and liberals, merely because they would not go along with the Birchers. Nothing better illustrates how far American opinion has moved to the right.

The rightists are not likely to win the Presidency, to come to national power. Any rightist third party will fail nationally. A rightist will probably not win the Republican nomination for President in 1964, and if he does he will be defeated. The great strength of rightism is in its drastic anti-Communism and in its unilateralist position in foreign affairs. Many a voter attracted to rightism on these grounds will be repelled by the right wing's opposition to the welfare state. The right cannot escape the incubus of its money bags, its Texas oil and cattle barons, its antediluvians. But the rightists will have difficulties uniting even on drastic anti-Communism. They will not succeed in combining their supporters in the rural, nativist, Protestant areas with the right-wing Catholics of the industrial areas, those very people most enthusiastic about McCarthy. And the fact that their immediate target will be President Kennedy, the nation's first Catholic President, makes such an alliance well-nigh impossible. The Kennedy combination of welfare state and anti-Communism will probably be an unbeatable one in the election.

However, in countering rightist thrusts in a predominantly conservative atmosphere, the Democrats might not only decline the opportunity afforded by the campaign to undermine rightist attitudes, but they might themselves confirm them. The Democrats will be liberal on domestic welfare issues, but in refusing to talk honestly and realistically about such questions as the international control of nuclear weapons and the possibility of a *modus vivendi* with the Communist powers (at least with the Soviet Union), they might leave unimpaired, or even strengthen, the attitudes upon which right-wingism feeds. If opinion continues to move to the right, so also may the Democratic party. Relatively, the Democratic party

would still be the liberal party, but would its leadership be liberal in the sense that the Stevenson leadership was liberal? Would it be liberal in the sense that the non-conservative parties in Britain and Western Europe are liberal?

The acid test for determining the decline of rightism is this: Have the excesses and the repressive measures in the states and localities significantly diminished? As has been pointed out, the extremist organizations may dwindle to insignificance, and it is most probable that the Democrats will win the Presidency again in 1964; but does it follow that rightist curtailments in the communities will lessen? Liberty is still safe in the nation, because on the national level there is enough pluralism to compel it. But how about the states and the localities, where there is far less pluralism and where rightist and semi-rightist consensus often crowds out liberty?

Most of us have been missing the point. The real danger to our libertarian society does not lie in the extremists. It does not lie in any taking over of the national government by the right, at least at the present time. It does not even lie in overt laws and directives by the state and local governments, harmful though these may be. Instead, it lies in the slow withering of the open society at the grass roots, in our growing disinclination to speak out and be ourselves, in an increasing circumspection and prudence, in the limitations of thought and expression we impose on ourselves and demand of others in the belief that these are necessary for national survival. The international crisis may continue indefinitely, and will these attitudes widen, deepen, harden? Will we grow accustomed to a narrower and narrower range of freedom, come to take for granted this slow erosion of our liberties?

In communities throughout the country, in civic clubs, professional organizations, parent-teacher associations, women's clubs, schools, and churches, day after day there are programs on the evils of Communism, the fundamentals of Americanism, the dangers of subversion. Even a scout lodge or a boy's club cannot be dedicated without reference to the work such organizations are doing to combat Communism. One hears little these days of the broad, flexible, pragmatic, experimental, dynamic American heritage. Instead, Americanism is being reduced to a doctrine, a dogma, a catechism.

The New Conservatism of the intellectuals and the deep impact

on the folk mind of years of Cold War have met. The resulting social atmosphere is not unlike that of Restoration Europe after the Congress of Vienna. It is as though one were living in the world of Stendhal's Julien Sorel—dull, stuffy, unimaginative, pious, inbred, ritualistic. In Metternich's Europe, all social good was summed up in "Throne and Altar." In the America of today, all social good is summed up in "Free Enterprise and the American Way."

This corroding of our open society is a sad thing in itself. And it has definite political implications for today. In such an atmosphere, any accommodation with the Communist powers is made difficult. Moreover, it is even endangering the President's domestic program, for congressmen from the grass roots, reflecting this atmosphere in the localities, do not hesitate to oppose the President's proposals, even when he appears to have a national mandate for them.

The time has come for the President to cut through this deadly atmosphere. He should become the nation's Great Teacher. He should take to the radio and TV and in a series of fireside chats patiently clarify for our people the trends and complexities of our time. What is required is not declaration or oratory or rhetoric but simple, direct—yes, pedagogical—explanation. He is surrounded by highly gifted and articulate college professors, and their aid should be invaluable in this work of luminous exposition.

In these fireside chats, the President should not minimize the dangers—the military might of the Soviet Union, the growing military strength of Red China, the continued vitality of Marxism as a revolutionary force, the attraction of Communist economies for the underdeveloped peoples. But he should dispel the gloom and defeatism by explaining the miscarriage of the international Communist revolution after World War I and again after World War II, the failure of Communism to win any advanced industrial country, the nature of the ideological and other rifts among the Communist countries, the spread not of Communist but of mixed economies among the underdeveloped peoples, the nature of these mixed economies and how they differ sharply from Communism.

The President should also point out that Americans who remain liberal and moderate in the face of decades of Communist challenge are giving the lie to Marxism, which holds that capitalist countries, when faced with this challenge, must necessarily go fascist, but that

Americans who go to the radical right are operating just as the Marxists said—and hoped—they would; that a rightist America would confirm the Stalinists in their orthodox Marxism, in their belief in the inevitability of war with the capitalist countries, would undermine the anti-Stalinists, would force Russia and Red China back into firm alliance, would aggravate Communist intransigence, would exacerbate international tensions, would enormously increase the chances of all-out nuclear war, and would move us in America to the garrison state.

All of this should be done in such a balanced way that Americans will learn how to respond flexibly or inflexibly to any given international situation, depending upon the particular circumstances.

Now, I am not for one instant arguing that at the present time the main obstacle to rapprochement with the Soviet Union lies in American public opinion. It lies, of course, in the ambiguity of the Russian position itself. But I am arguing that a more resilient attitude on the part of Americans might make accommodations easier, might guarantee that, should the time come when fruitful negotiations are actually possible, that time will not tragically slip by, and might even encourage the President to greater initiative in the direction of rapprochement. And I am also arguing that if rightist attitudes continue to grow, American opinion may eventually become so monolithically rigid with respect to the Communist powers that it can never again be made flexible. In any event, putting basic trends of world politics into large perspective would do much to reassure the American people, dispel the persuasiveness of the right's unilateralist approach to foreign affairs, and reaffirm the American determination to continue a foreign policy which respects world opinion, the views of allies, and the integrity of the United Nations.

Since the rightists link "creeping socialism" at home with an international Communist conspiracy, it might also be well for the President to give a series of talks about basic domestic trends. He might, with enormous possibilities for enlightenment, discuss the following: why government, particularly national government, in all industrial countries has expanded; why such expansion, within the milieu of a free and an open society, represents for the most part not a curtailment but an enlargement of individual opportunity and freedom; why we could not decentralize our federal government

without first decentralizing our economy and our society, and why we could not decentralize these without dismantling our modern machine technology and returning to the local and small-unit pre-machine economy of a century ago; why any President or party in power in Washington must preside over a large and an expanding federal government, and why the real question is not whether we shall have little or big government but whether the big government we have should use its powers to protect and widen liberties consistent with the dynamic American tradition or inhibit them in the direction of a closed society.

Although the President must necessarily take the lead in interpreting public affairs and foreign policy for the American people, he should positively encourage other practicing politicians with an insightful understanding of world politics—such as Stevenson, Bowles, Fulbright, Mansfield, Senator Humphrey, Senator John Sherman Cooper, and others—to make interpretive radio and TV talks supplementing his own. This would not only help in the work of popular clarification, but it would also be a reassurance that foreign policy is not to be left too much to the non-political and relatively anonymous braintrusters and experts. For a variety of reasons, we appear to be moving to "managerial democracy," a government by an increasingly personalized Presidency surrounded by technicians, career specialists, trained administrators, and "think boys" from the academies. Much of this trend is necessary and some of it is beneficial, and it is not so far advanced that it cannot be adjusted to America's tradition of popular government by a wise Presidential leadership with an instinct for democracy.

Is there, running through this article, an implication that the American press has failed to inform the American people adequately about public affairs? The American press pours out more factual information than any other press in the world. But compared to the British press, for instance, it is not an interpretive press. Even the most sophisticated of our leading newspapers do not reveal an awareness of the pluralism in our world or of the alternatives and variety of approaches in foreign policy as do the *Economist*, the *Times*, the *Observer*, and the *Guardian* in Britain, and it must be remembered that our New York *Times* does not blanket the United States as the leading London dailies blanket Britain. Even the most insightful of

our columnists—even Walter Lippmann or James Reston—rarely devote a series of columns to explaining a trend or a movement, to putting basic forces in large perspective. And besides, how many grass-roots Americans read Reston or Lippmann? But all this begs the chief question. Ordinary citizens do not in the main get their political education from reading the newspapers. What they get from the newspapers is likely to be fugitive, impressionistic, and directed to no specific purpose. Ordinary citizens usually get their political education from discussing and debating concrete political issues during political campaigns. (The campaign of 1960 frightened rather than educated.) Our political questions have now become so complex that before the concrete issues can be discussed intelligently (and before they can be discussed at all they must be formulated by the political leaders), it is necessary that background material be made available by national leaders who can command national attention and the mass media. For these reasons the importance of interpretive fireside chats by the President and other national political leaders has been stressed. Rightist distortions of world politics have now become so egregious—and so persuasive to so many grass-roots Americans—that the President must take emergency educational measures to give his countrymen a realistic view of our world today.

The continued contraction of our open society by the spread of right-wing attitudes would be tragic in itself. It would be doubly tragic if America's movement to the right resulted in the adoption of the right wing's aggressive unilateralism in foreign affairs, thereby repelling most of the rest of the world, playing into the hands of the Communists, causing a significant Communist expansion, and reversing the world trends which are now, on balance, in America's favor. And it would be triply tragic if all this occurred because Americans misread the trends of history as unfavorable to them when in fact they had been favorable—and thus lost a world because they accepted a Marxist myth.

Comment

■ Perhaps the most disturbing element in Professor William Carleton's article is his dismissal of "President Kennedy's proposals for great changes in America's trade and tariff policies" in a sentence. Here is an issue which, interestingly enough, arises in great part because of the successful application of a previous bit of foreign policy—the Marshall Plan. In the postwar years American aid to Europe found such response that the Continent has now become a powerful competitor to the American economy. The Common Market development has proceeded so far that it challenges the Soviets as well as the United States, and it bids to so alter the world's economic relationships as to upset some of the terms of the Cold War. Professor Carleton says, "Those issues of foreign policy which impinge on bread-and-butter questions and appeal to the pressure groups still arouse practical political interest and get thorough discussion. . . ." Since he is interested here only in what he thinks will not be publicly debated (which seems to be everything else!) this would appear to be his reason for quick dismissal.

Obviously I cannot go back of that dismissal so extensively as to rewrite his article for him, but I must wonder why he makes distinctions between one part of foreign policy and another. The Common Market problem is a new one. It is quite as difficult to understand as the Trends to the Right, on which he spends so much effort, and it will take more explication. Furthermore, it demands a new, not an old, liberal alignment. It seems to me that no statement of our foreign policy and its discussion can fairly ignore it, and on that note I would protest its exclusion.

I am not persuaded, either, that "American opinion may eventually become so monolithically rigid with respect to the Communist powers that it can never again be made flexible." Most of us have too great a vested interest in happy contentment and in personal adjustment for that. We are so innoculated against disagreeable facts that a public suggestion of serious American-Soviet negotiations would send our expectations immediately into orbit. A few years ago, when cries of fellow-travelling against eggheads were especially common, one of our contributors, Paul Willen, examined public utterances during the war; he wrote up the results, and we published them under the title "Who

'Collaborated' With Russia?" There was an astonishing catholicity among a remarkable number of people who "went soft" on Russian Communism in a time hardly removed from the era of the Russian purges; the list included rock-headed reactionaries and hardened conservatives as well as "enlightened" liberals. Americans are a naturally friendly, impulsive, and sometimes heedless people, and their national character affects their attitude toward foreign affairs.

As I read Professor Carleton's remarks about the erosion of democratic discussion of foreign policy and about the rightist and semi-rightist fixation on Communism, I kept thinking of the recent congressional hearings on the checking of Pentagon speeches by the State Department. Would Professor Carleton favor the generals' "civil liberty" and uninhibited speech on foreign policy? Obviously not, for General Walker and others are using Communism in exactly the manner he is so critical of. Civil control of the military is not the only significant issue here. A few of the generals, plus senators like Strom Thurmond, have been among the last to learn that we must speak responsibly in foreign affairs, that we have to sober up to our job of international leadership. The basic issue is responsibility, in non-utterance as well as in utterance.

It seems to me disingenuous to say that we aren't discussing foreign policy the way we did after the Spanish American War and before and after World Wars I and II. How could we imitate those by-gone debates and the context in which they took place? Those earlier discussions were naive in many respects; we were isolationist and thought we could afford to disregard the rest of the world. But suppose today that in leading the Free World we debated something half as important as the old League of Nations and (after seeming to support it) repudiated it by senatorial debate as we did in 1922. We can't afford that kind of current irresponsibility.

Professor Carleton makes some interesting suggestions about the Berlin problem. (He is not clear about our relations to China.) But can we debate foreign policy in terms of tactics and moves on a chessboard?

We face a familiar dilemma in any popular debate of foreign affairs, a dilemma unmentioned by Professor Carleton. We want to discuss foreign policy (including strategy and tactics), and after that we expect to come to agreement (favorable to us) on the discussed issues with ruthless, totalitarian powers operating in a context of anarchy. How does one perform this feat of legerdemain?

No one seems to know.

As I write, a very popular weekly has published a lead article called

"The Trouble With the State Department." One can predict much of what it says before one reads it. For similar articles have been published and similar investigations of State have been made over and over again by congressional committees and government commissions ever since the end of World War II. Not too facetiously, one may ask why, after this considerable time, the political plumbers down in Washington don't fix the trouble with the State Department. But the dichotomy between political discussion of foreign relations and action by professional Foreign Service officers seems so fundamental it never has been bridged. The first is politically useful; the second, which is necessary to carry on the practical business of international relationships in an anarchic world, is considered "elitist" and gets neither sympathy nor respect.

Hard diplomatic negotiation has no press agent in this country and no real standing. Yet we cannot do without it. I am neither pleased nor satisfied when Professor Carleton says, "Look, the Communists haven't taken over the world the way Lenin said they would." (Ought we to have expected them to?) In order to be flexible in negotiation, one first has to be confident and strong. When critics call for a "get tough" policy with Russia, they are wrong if they apply it solely to military affairs, but they have a point when they insist that we put starch in our program and that in negotiation we bargain as persistently and as toughly as the Soviets. As a polity we have never really come to terms with the necessity for preparation for work abroad, for diplomatic strength and will, and for the patience and persistence on which a successful foreign relations program largely rests; nor do we give the Foreign Service recognition for the job it tries to do.

In his brilliant book, *Diplomat*, Charles W. Thayer devotes a final chapter to this subject. The history he presents there is unflattering to almost everyone, politician and administrative expert alike, who has concerned himself with the Foreign Service. In the very last pages Thayer throws up his hands in despair over the problem of getting public understanding of what the diplomatic job abroad is really like. The congressional investigating committees and commissions of critics and reformers who have repeatedly but unsuccessfully tried to establish administrative effectiveness in the Foreign Service seem to have failed basically because they have never lived and worked abroad themselves and because they have been unwilling to depend on the knowledge of those who have had foreign working experience.

Ignorance and lack of basic experience are greater faults of American performance in foreign relations and foreign policy than lack of democratic discussion. We are learning by trial and error. But it may be ironic if

not unfortunate that the nation which has taken the lead in aiding the underdeveloped nations of the world is itself underdeveloped—in international relations.

Let me say also a word about civil liberties and "the excesses and repressive measures in the states and localities." Professor Carleton argues, if I read him aright, that the Democrats can probably take the presidency again in 1964 and maintain a national liberal position (at least on domestic issues) but that our libertarian society is being dissolved away at the grass roots. I am inclined to wonder if the states can remain half slave, liberally speaking, in the localities, and half free, on the national front.

There would seem to be some difficulty or difference of approach in identifying and measuring objective evidence of liberal or conservative developments. To this observer it was interesting that the first and most effective opponent of the Birch Society was a relatively obscure octogenarian editor in the small city (Santa Barbara) where the society made its first serious bid for influence. One newspaper technique I have seen used effectively (and this in Professor Carleton's own state of Florida) has been to take the extreme rightist position apart piece by piece, and then, not to give warrant to charges of suppression, to print in the letter column occasional attempts at rebuttal in defense of Birchism and its cohorts. The Tampa *Tribune* took this tack recently, and the several letters of so-called apologia which it published over a period of time were so defeatist and defensive as to be ludicrous. The technique has been common and, I believe, also effective; if it were not, one might begin to doubt the utility of the open forum as a democratic method.

Since I am a librarian, I am especially sensitive, further, to the charges of increased censorship in the country. I do not see the evidence for this conclusion. True, we have Henry Miller today, and formerly we didn't. That may be exactly the point. Five or ten years ago who would have tried to publish *The Tropic of Cancer* in the States? As a matter of fact, what is there left that can't be printed (if you except libel)? Miller's book is still in a kind of temporary legal limbo, of course, but it is a limbo lots of publishers would like to have on their hands. Who can doubt of the gold to be dug from the dirt in the Miller hills?

Early in February *The Library Journal* published a survey of more than a hundred widely chosen American public libraries and their attitudes toward selecting and making available twenty books (including *Tropic*) known as "controversial" because of their freedom of language or pointedness of subject matter. The reports from individual libraries

were varied, yet the books with serious social purpose or literary quality (strike out such a work as *Peyton Place*) seemed to be getting through to a large part of the library reading public; as of the moment *Tropic of Cancer* actually seems to be moving more freely in library circulation than it is in book stores. Yes, censorship is less of a serious threat than it used to be.

This does not mean we can give up the fight for intellectual freedom. But the basic problem, more than ever before, is how to get more of a thoughtful reading public for the multitude of important plain-spoken books already on the open shelves.

—Paul Bixler

Mama, See the Soldiers

By ROBERT HERSHON

sure men marching to
the seeing eye dog's pace
shiny-buttoned through the mud
uniformly faded, fainting neatly
beneath their own white sun

stepping firmly where
their blind eyes can never see
forgetting the lies they gave
their sons when they sang
gay orders to high stepping death

where now is the fire
that once shot through your milky eyes
as you parade solemn and alone
single file in the winding weeds
with no sound but the barking of dogs

Robert Hershon, a graduate of New York University and a newspaper reporter, began writing poems six months before this first acceptance.

The Ceiling

By ROBERT SWARD

John liked ceilings;
he liked them very high
in the morning,
and then low at night.

At dawn he liked
a distance to rise to;
and in the evening
a closeness to sleep to.

John was indifferent
to floors, walls
dazed even
in his walking
gazing, upon them.

In the afternoon he liked
a quiet ceiling, damp
and darkening
later, as the sky.

John passed from ceiling to ceiling;
and when it was very dark,
he'd turn on the light, open
the window, and look at the night.

ROBERT SWARD's poems have appeared in most of the leading American journals, most recently here in our Fall '60 issue. He studied in England this past year on a Fulbright grant, and Putnam is publishing a volume of his poetry in London.

Maine April Morning

By ROBERT B. KIMBER

■ Father wanted to know, of course, when he came back cursing from town, knocking the sticky April snow from his snowshoes and dragging two weeks' ham, beans, whiskey, and murder magazines on his bulging toboggan, why I had taken Esau out of his hovel. The horse's tracks, more a furrow in the still deep and sodden snow, ran along Father's path and beyond the kitchen door of our cabin where he stopped, asked that simple question, and, by the asking, made my heart beat hugely against the poison of my guilty soul.

Earlier in the afternoon I had tried to cover up the tracks, although I knew full well this was no downy January snow that would whisk about under my hand almost as lightly as it had fallen. My sweeping turned into scraping, then to digging, finally to beating on the cursed, unmalleable, white, melting mush that clogged the broom, soaked it, added six pounds to its weight, and, together with my frantic swabbings, dissolved it into scattered straws and a naked green stick.

So—I thought to myself, standing there smelling my own wet woolen shirt—so I took Esau out. I'd taken him out millions of times before. There was nothing wrong with that. I could harness him and feed him and do anything with him that anyone else could do.

So I threw the broomstick back into the woods, not wanting to burn it in the stove for fear Mother, when she got back from visiting Aunt May in Lewiston, might find the little binding wire in the ashes and then ask Father and me why one of us had burnt up a broom, for heaven's sake.

A resident of a Maine woods camp, ROBERT B. KIMBER is presently a graduate student in German literature at Princeton. This is his first published story.

When I tried twenty minutes later with a shovel, I found I could either smooth over the horse's trail, leaving it like newly spread cheese, or fill it in less obviously by taking snow from a trench which I would have to dig beside it. After trampling out the shovel marks and trampling under the straw, I left Esau's tracks as they were and told Father, when he asked, that I had taken the horse out because it had been warm and it was spring and I had wanted something to do. Father grunted what I took to be approval as we began to unload the toboggan, and my mind began to wander, aimless and panicked, like the steps of a lost man, through the fears of the approaching dusk. Nearly an hour of daylight remained, plenty of time for Father to grow restless, even though he was tired, and go wandering down the road, following Esau's tracks without thinking because the path was already broken; and the path would take him around the bend in the road, past the woodshed and the root cellar and the main camp where we and the fishermen and hunters all ate from ice-out until the end of November. And when Father reached the shore of the pond, he'd see that the tracks went out onto the pulpy spring ice, and he'd see how the buried water had oozed up into the horse's trail, forming a small canal in the graying blanket of slush that still covered the pond. And then he would realize that the tracks went down to the pond but didn't come back.

But most likely Father would go inside, breaking an icicle off the eaves as he went, crack the ice up in a glass, pour himself a drink from his new bottle of whiskey, hang his damp rubbers on the rafters, and warm his feet under the stove as he sipped his drink down to the dregs of tar and dirt that the icicle had carried from the paper roof. He'd smile a quiet smile and tell me I should hurry up and get old enough to drink, that two drinks make one taste better.

But then he might wake up in the middle of the night, when I knew the horse's tracks would start to glow with devil's fire, just as I felt them in my heart, as though each print were an iron shoe fresh from the forge. And Father would see that dull-red, burning trail leading from the hovel, passing behind our cabin, and stretching out on the pond like a hot poker. Then he would wake me and ask what under heaven could make fire during a thaw, and I would be afraid to crawl from the shelter of my bed, fearing a trace of that fire had touched me, had branded my forearm or thigh or forehead.

Why, I thought, didn't Father see it now, especially now, as he loaded groceries into my outstretched arms and looked directly into my burning face? Surely he would find me out soon, as soon as the gray thieves of evening had crept from their caves of shadow under the firs and stolen the last bit of light from the still distant April sun. Father would see then the glow of my skin and eyes, and I would be a spectacle of guilt, like a heretic writhing at the stake.

Nonsense, of course, all those fears. But Father would find out. Father would still know, tomorrow morning at the latest, that I had killed our beloved dappled horse, even if I could bear to go through the act of feeding him. Sometime before noon Father would realize, perhaps as we went down to clean the guest camps for the rush of spring fishermen, that he hadn't heard Esau's hoofs drumming slowly and softly on the dirt floor of the hovel or hadn't heard the contemplative snuffling of a horse rejoicing in a quart of oats. The hovel would be empty, and the harness would no longer be hanging on the wall. And we would surely cross the trail that went out onto the pond but didn't come back.

I wished I had had the courage to tell Father about it then, the minute he had come home, to tell him Esau had disappeared from the earth, the whole hugeness of him, muscle, bones, blood, and heart, his velvety, sugar-hunting nose, his warmth that filled the hovel and made steam in the stinging cold of January, his bulking power as he trotted home ahead of us from a winter day's work, shaking steel and leather music from his cold harness and beating time with his snow-shod hoofs. All that was gone, that strength and gentleness. I wished, too, that I could be gone, or that I had never come into this life, one that had such affections and risks to offer. I wished that Father had stayed in the shipyards in Portland, that he had never chosen this forest, this one pond, this camp where he could leave me on an April morning. And I wished, besides, as I leaned the now emptied toboggan against our cabin, that I could disappear into the damp, newly washed air of spring or melt away in one of the thousands of unseen rivulets that ran beneath the fading snow, perhaps to come alive again in the lupine that bloomed before my cabin door, waking only in summer to sunshine and the visits of bees and hummingbirds, never knowing the decay of winter into spring.

And it was decay, I thought, as I stood alone on the porch that morning after Father had gone. The sun's warm touch patted the snow into dank mush, like the cold, corny pulp that fat ladies drench with cherry, lemon, or lime syrup and sell as a treat at the county fair. February's sun was kinder, shining through air so clean that only hawks had ever tasted it before, a sun kindling each snowflake into frozen flame, never burning, never coaxing mist and tangles of new green ferns and alders from the soaking earth of spring, a sun that rose only to see and let be seen the white perfection of a wintering land. With the first deep, fine snow of December that buried the mud of fall and the tracks of deer and hunters, the world held its breath, stopped the rot and stink and growth of its other seasons, and so became perfect, statuesque, but remained alive.

But I had loved this one winter more than any other because its three-foot board of ice on the pond held and preserved the first real treasure of my life, my first creation and so my first treasure, a Model A Ford which three years ago had been doomed to stand, as it now stood, in the middle of the pond, waiting for the ice to melt out from under it and let it quietly slip from this life. Father was always one for neatness, and I had seen I don't know how many pounds of metal disappear by this neat method, a burnt-out cooking range, a cracked axle, numberless odd springs, wheels, pots, and yards of rusted stove pipe. Mother once said that the pond would get sick and throw up all that garbage one day and that getting rid of stuff that way was unclean. Father said it was all metal and rusting was burning and nothing was cleaner than burning. But it looked dirty if it happened all over the camp or on a junk heap in the woods. So he'd rather have all that clean dirt on the bottom of the pond.

But a car, a whole car, was almost a living thing, beautifully intricate with its hundreds of milled and polished parts oiled smoother than shadows and black satin, all of them jumping to life under a spark and a breath of air. A car was something a man could love, something that could almost love back, despite its failings and sometimes faithlessness. It could howl and snarl and purr like a cat, buck, start, and balk like a horse. And how it could talk and tease when it got attention, how it could revel in new spark plugs, choke its dissatisfaction or hum its pleasure with carburetor tinkering, or simply swoon unconscious when its distributor quit. And how I

loved machines, loved to take one apart, to clean and polish all its parts until the cylinder bore shone and the bearings mirrored a curved face back at me and the crankshaft sat like a primeval caterpillar, silvery and black in alternate twisting sections. Then, as I put in the new part or ground the valves, I imagined what a rich, grateful voice the motor would have after I had repaired it, reassembled it, and nearly re-created it.

So when Father had said, three years before, that the Ford had to go, I had argued and begged and turned all my unreasoning love to reason, promising that I would fix it on my own time and pay for any new parts out of my own money. Father, I knew, couldn't resist snatching the last half horsepower from a machine nor using everything to its final goodness without wasting a crumb, a drop, a penny, a pound, or when he walked through the woods, a step.

He came to decisions the same way he found his path home after a day's hunting, lifting his head, looking about him at the time of the sky and the valleys, then at the compass in his hand. And he always went by such pointers, knowing that a man became twisted sooner than a compass. Three years ago he had believed I could build some life into the Ford and he had let me do it. The job cost me a few dollars and a month of summer evenings, working from suppertime until the mosquitoes and dusk drove me out of the shed where the Ford sat forlornly, its engine torn from it and rolled over on two maple blocks. Large parts were carefully organized on shelves and small ones kept in grapefruit juice cans, for I found it impossible not to strip off every moving part once I had gone far enough to replace the cracked piston in question. There was no need, of course, only the need to show myself that I could tear a lump of scrap metal into shreds and build into those shreds the energy of a blizzard and the delicacy of a snowflake.

But this year there was no saving the Ford. It had collapsed slowly, year by year, despite my best care, and I knew, as well as Father did, that it now cost far more to run and maintain than it was worth. I hadn't minded, last December, when Esau pulled it out onto the ice, probably because I somehow thought the winter would never end, the ice would always be three feet thick, and my car would never disappear but would remain forever my creation, forever framed in its shrine of pure, wind-carved snow, like the bones

of a saint laid out in white silk. Going to and from my trap lines, I had passed by it on bright January mornings and during the dusks of February when the sky's gray crept slowly down to blend with the snow and turn the day to night, and I had seen how the fox had started out across the clean blanket of snow, stopped, hesitated curiously, turned toward this new winter monument, circled it once, then twice, coming nearer but still keeping his distance, and finally, satisfied and dissatisfied, gone on his neat way. The winter birds often swooped down in their flights, attracted by a shape in the middle of nothing, and they would peek respectfully through the glassless windows at the luxury of the white plush interior, marvelling that man could create such a marvellous thing. Then they flitted off to their small tasks of food finding.

The winter thus paid daily homage to what I had done. The car and its shadow blended together under the northern course of the sun, forming an onyx, brightly visible in its blackness, that never quite disappeared from the white hands of winter, even, it seemed to me, on the darkest nights; and this small jewel was always the first thing I saw each morning and the last each evening.

When April began, though, I had to realize that my car was not immortal, that Father had indeed intended to get rid of it when he put it out on the ice. No workings of my imagination could deny the coming of spring. As the temperature rose daily, threatening to rise above freezing, I would stare at the column of mercury, cursing it, praying to it, daring it, against my will, to let winter die. And still it continued to rise until numberless icicles dripped frantic rhythms into the wet snow beneath the eaves and the square shoulders of winter rounded softly into spring.

After Father had gone to town that April morning, I stood on the porch of our cabin and looked out across the pond. The world was collapsing into pulp around me. The thermometer stood at thirty-five, the sun was high, and we had had our first breath of rain the day before, barely a mist, but it was rain, and the ice of the pond had already lost its neat, black solidity under the snow and become a gray honeycombed roof over the water. But it was still thick and strong, I thought, strong enough to hold the car which stood dripping, its winter mantle of snow torn from it. If the ice was strong enough for the car, it was certainly strong enough for me and the

horse. I shivered to think what Father would do if he knew what I was thinking. Perhaps he did indeed know, for my heart beat so loudly I thought Father must surely hear it and come back to see what was wrong. But then he would be really glad, too, if the car were saved. He might growl at seeing it standing by the dock, quite safe, but he would really be glad.

I ran down to the pond with an axe and cut through the ice in two places, soaking myself through as each stroke splashed up geysers of slush. Of course the ice was thick enough. And as I harnessed Esau, I thought of summer, how the sun would ripen grass and ferns and fill the woods with shocks of flowers, how it

would paint the whirring of a bee's wings with color, how it would shine gold on the blue and white of a pond breeze, and how, if I did nothing, beneath that water, down how many hundreds of feet where it was blacker and colder than a living thing could imagine black and cold to be, my car would rot, its cylinders flooded with black water. Father *would* be glad to have it back.

Feeling perfectly confident, I hooked a logging chain around the front bumper. Esau and I had come out to the car easily, ploughing through the slush but always hitting firm ice beneath it. Nothing could go wrong. I was much too happy with my decision, and the car almost shouted a greeting to us, the sun glancing off its old chrome headlights. I had cleverly rigged an emergency release for the chain. Simply by pulling on a rope fastened to a pin, I could free Esau from his load. But I knew there would be no need. Esau plunged slowly ahead, his big head bobbing patiently with each step, and the car followed, half skidding, half rolling. I felt as though I held the reins of the sun chariot in my hands, felt that I could veer north or south, freezing my world into changeless perfection or melting it into the slime and mud of the seasons.

My thoughts disappeared in the unthinkable cold of the water. I had not fallen through the ice, it hadn't broken, there hadn't been a sound. The world had simply dissolved beneath my feet. The quiet was so absolute that I nearly laughed. Neither Esau nor the car were to be seen, and I had become a chattering jack-o'-lantern floating on a patch of black water. Half a second later, Esau, freed from his anchor by the rope that I still clutched in my paralyzed hand, exploded through the blocks of pulpy ice and lashed out at the gray bank before him. It disintegrated under his pounding hoofs, and he rushed again, screaming in panic and pain. Terrified by the thrashing muscle and steel only feet from me, I scrambled onto firm ice.

Esau would have to drown. Even if the ice around him had held, he couldn't have pulled himself up on it with nothing but water beneath his hind legs. And I, tiny, frozen master of horsepower, realized that I could not help this one struggling horse I did indeed love. His eyes bulged wildly from his head as he nearly leaped from the water only to plunge back in the freezing slush. He tried three times, with less strength each time, until I turned and ran to our cabin, feeling that I was growing solid with each step and becoming

a dumpy statue, like a snowman that had melted and re-frozen a dozen times.

When I could go out again two hours later, there was nothing but a black hole in the ice. And I thought how much blacker and colder it was beneath and how Esau's bones and muscles must have frozen, his lungs and heart burst, his eyes gone blind, and his warmth turned to cold.

And after supper that night, the cold finally took hold of me, turning every scrap of me to chilled metal while my fever ran, a weakening spark that seemed to burn my breath and blood. As I got up from my chair and went to my bed in the far corner of the camp, my shadow crept out, huge and growing, before me, falling across the neat coils of Mother's braided rug, across our snow-white cat curled into a sleeping, slowly breathing puff ball, across a stretch of bare floor that we had painted green two years before. Then a black hand stretched out, charred the pale smoothness of the log walls, stained my pillow black, promising to poison my sleep and every morning's waking. So I stood by my small bed table, staring down at it, tinkering aimlessly with the matches there, my jackknife, my compass. Perhaps I stood there as long as it takes to drown, until Father finally asked me what was wrong.

Whodunnit

By WILLIAM H. SHELLEY

The butler insists he did not kill the girl
Found unraped but dead upon the beach:
The chauffeur admits a past affair with her
But shows a movie stub, describes the film:
And now the Man From Headquarters, with pipe,
Has gathered us together in the sitting room,
Lets our soiled consciences tremble us a bit
And reconstructs the movements of the deceased
So cleverly we'd almost swear he killed the wench.
(Of course we know he would have raped her, too.)
He points, with pipe, exclaims "YOU killed her!"
My gentle Uncle Peter who would never harm a hawk
Among his chickens. We are shocked and wait
For the lights to fail and Uncle Peter to attempt
A vain escape; we even hear the motor running
In the car conveniently left below the window.
Oddly enough, the lights stay on. Gentle Uncle Peter
Does not cry out, whip hidden gun from sleeve.

The press and the police are gone; the body
Matches coldness with a shelf in the morgue.
We drink one last round before bed. Too bad.
Now someone else will have to die, and someone else
Until the stupid Animal From Headquarters learns
That we do not commit our murders by ourselves.

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Another Look at the Chinese Communists

By HOWARD ZINN

■ For some time now, we have been developing the belief that the Chinese Communists are incorrigible and unyielding, more radical than the Russians, irrational and fanatic, even advocates of war. And deep inside this view there is often the unvoiced assumption that extremism is somehow inherent in Chinese Communism, either because of its Oriental heritage or because it is dogmatically Marxian in a way that Soviet Communism is not.

Current pictures reinforce this. Next to the jovial Khrushchev, Mao Tse-tung looks glum and stereotypically impassive. Out of Moscow come hundreds of American summer visitors, while out of Peking comes only Edgar Snow. Khrushchev denounced Stalin, but who denounces Mao? Russians are looking more bourgeois every day with their washing machines and TV antennas, while the Chinese Communists gather, blue-uniformed and antlike, in communes. Quotations from the China mainland press are frightening in the vehemence of their denunciations. And during the recent Twenty-Second Party Congress in Moscow, our headlines emphasized the attack by Khrushchev and the defense by Chou En-lai of Albanian "Stalinism."

As Harold Isaacs points out in *Scratches On Our Minds*, Ameri-

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cans have been able to switch their images of the Chinese with amazing rapidity, and within the compass of a few decades these images could include the "Yellow Peril," the "simple coolie," and the "staunch ally." With the Communist victory on the mainland, the pictures have grown successively more grim: disciplined hordes pouring across the Yalu in the Korean War; relentless brainwashers; world outcasts unfit to associate with other members of the United Nations. During the past year, newspapers and periodicals have given much attention to disagreement between the Chinese and the Russians, in which the latter are a moderating influence while the Chinese are seen as extremist, fanatical, and uncompromising.

Despite all this and more, I am about to argue that against the claim of a dogmatic rigidity in the Chinese Communists there is powerful countering evidence. We have been given by the mass media a distorted view of Chinese thinking and behavior, which reveal in fact a remarkable flexibility long noted by China experts but blocked out of the public vision by newspaper headlines. There is, unquestionably, a special truculence which China shows today. But I would say it is not a necessary concomitant of Chinese Communism. It is due neither to Chinese tradition nor to Marxist ideology but to certain circumstances, some of which are alterable by us.

The notion of a basic intransigence, of an unreasoning fanaticism, in Chinese Communism dangerously limits the range of alternatives for the United States in its dealings with China. One prepares differently to deal with a rhinoceros than with a fox, and it is particularly confusing when the fox is the size of a rhinoceros and even makes noises like one.

I propose therefore to take quick but firm looks at Chinese tradition, Communist ideology (both Marxist and Maoist), and Chinese Communist practice, to see if these bear out the contention of an unyielding orthodoxy. Then, perhaps, we may find implications for current United States policy.

In no country has the weight of the past lain heavier than on China, and nowhere has a regime moved with such determination to obliterate that past. The digging-up of graves to plant potatoes is both practical and symbolic. But even the monstrous steam shovel of

the Chinese Communists has been unable to excavate cleanly four thousand years of tradition. The books of a young Sinologist, Joseph Levenson, have demonstrated the torment with which Chinese intellectuals of the past hundred years (the nationalist reformers K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, among others) have attempted to hold to Confucianism while adapting to the modern world. And the Communists, less tortured, have nevertheless paid some obeisance to the past.

In 1950, top theoretician Liu Shao-ch'i expressed the party position on national tradition: "As regards historical heritages, whether Chinese or foreign, we neither accept or reject them without discrimination, but accept critically what is valuable and useful and discard what is valueless and inapplicable. . . ." This is a no more unfavorable attitude towards the past than that expressed by the influential Chinese liberal Hu Shih, who, like many advanced thinkers of his generation, sought for a sharp break with the classical heritage. Levenson tells of the 1952 Peking celebration where, to the four international cultural giants celebrated in Warsaw and Prague—Avicenna, Leonardo, Hugo, Gogol—the Chinese added the ancient poet Ch'ü Yüan.

The most fervent of Communist leaders, as well as the entire upper crust of Chinese intelligentsia now working with the regime, were brought up in the environment of Confucian thought. Even if only fragments are left, even if it is carefully pruned and controlled, the Confucian heritage needs to be considered in any evaluation of the pressures impinging on Communist society today.

What is this heritage? As ambiguous as Confucianism is, as prone to interpretation and to the scholarly disputes engendered by the difficulties of translating imprecise Chinese characters into precise English letters, it is safe to say that Sinologists do not find dogmatism and intransigence among its characteristics. At its worst, it was passive, conservative, and resistant to change. It can be accused of lacking militancy. But it cannot be accused of failing to compromise. Compromise, with its best and worst accompanying features, was close to the heart of Confucianism. And in its most admirable aspects, Confucianism called for human-heartedness, empathy, love, or however one chooses to translate *jen*.

There are other elements in the Chinese tradition besides Con-

fucianism (though none extolled more by the literati of China). The closest thing in the Chinese heritage to modern totalitarianism is the Legalist school of philosophy of the Ch'in dynasty; yet, the Communists have paid it little attention as far as we can tell. As for Taoism and Buddhism, here certainly are no strains of activism or fierceness to feed the Communists. It seems reasonable to guess that, however small the total effect of Chinese tradition on the Communists, it would be in the direction of compromise rather than belligerence.

If, however, traditional ideology is being swept aside in China with a few mutterings of respect which amount to last rites, Marxist ideology is certainly not being discarded. And even if we accept the idea that there is a wide gulf between theory and practice (here Communism, Christianity, and democracy all have something in common), it is hard to argue that an ideology disseminated in millions of books, over the radio, and through the apparatus of a tightly organized, massive political party which reaches into every area of life of the seven hundred million Chinese, has no effect on the policy of the regime.

Taking a cautious, minimal position on the relationship between theory and practice, we might say that Communist policy is a resultant of two forces: the pressure of immediate needs, and the pull of a powerful ideology—with the relative strength of each force varying from situation to situation. For instance, it seems clear that, despite varying national circumstances, all Communist countries including Yugoslavia have followed the ideological compulsion to socialization of industry and collectivization of agriculture. All of the shifts and variations, including the Soviet New Economic Policy, Polish slowed collectivization, Chinese communes, and Yugoslav semi-socialization, have taken place within a general Marxian anti-private enterprise scheme. (Policy-ideology reverberations in the Soviet Union have been acutely analyzed by Barrington Moore, who corroborates the above and finds varying effects of ideology on policy in different situations.) On the other hand, the "withering away of the state" idea has been subordinated to perceived national needs, so that both the de-Stalinization in Russia and the Hundred Flowers movement in China have been mere episodes within an overall party dictatorship.

In further support of the statement that ideology must exert some pull on the Chinese Communist regime, the point might be made that in situations where immediate pressures neutralize one another, or where there is no overwhelming pull in any one direction, with many roads open, ideology is likely to determine the road to be taken. All this indicates that, while understanding the limitations of its influence, it is important to examine Chinese Communist ideology for evidence of any special unyielding bellicosity. And here we need to consider both classical Marxism and its Maoist offspring.

Is classical Marxist theory a source of Chinese intransigence? The trouble in answering this question is that Marxism, like Christianity, has many interpretations, and its texts, like the Bible, are contradictory in many places. Thus, Trotsky and Stalin, Khrushchev and Tito, Mao and Nenni, all have called themselves Marxists. The Marxist literature talks again and again of violence, but it leaves loopholes and speaks of the possibility of parliamentary transition to power under certain conditions. It calls for dictatorship of the proletariat but also sees this as giving way to a society where no class dictatorship will exist. Marx can be quoted to prove he was devoted to tactics of violence; he can also be quoted to prove that he was a humanist and a democrat (as the French scholar Maximillian Rubel has shown with considerable documentation).

There are two very fundamental tenets in the Marxist world view—that is, in the philosophy of dialectical materialism—which lend themselves to changing, flexible tactics of social struggle rather than to dogmatism and rigidity. First, in the materialist conception of history, there is a belief that ideas are fundamentally the result of the "material conditions" of life, and that any change in these conditions calls for a change in ideology. This enables a Marxist to shift ground at any time with the argument that "objective conditions" have changed. Second, there is that law of Marxian dialectics which asserts the constant mutability of the universe, accepting nothing as absolute or eternal. Concepts of morality, truth, beauty are all conditional and subject to change. This principle, too, gives Marxists an excellent justification for fluidity in tactics rather than rigidity. Stalin kept reiterating: "Marxism-Leninism is not a dogma; it is a guide to action."

If these two points are taken seriously by Marxists, how do we explain the universal view of them by their critics as rigid and unyielding ideologists? The answer, I think, lies in the fact that there are various kinds of dogmatism, and we seldom distinguish among them. The Marxists are maddeningly obstinate in holding to an idea once they have adopted it; yet they are capable of moving from one policy to another, one tactic to another, with lightning rapidity, under certain conditions. A rough analogy might be that of an elephant which in the course of an hour changes position in its cage fifty times, but each time it rests in any one position it remains immovable.

Another point about the special Marxian dogmatism is that it is almost impervious to counter-argumentation but will abandon a position in a split second with an observed change in "the objective conditions." You can't *argue* a Marxist out of a statement; but if he suddenly perceives reality differently on his own, he may shift. (Granted, your argument might lead him to this new perception; also, something you do to change reality—and this is more pertinent to the theme of this article—could lead to reconsideration on his part.)

The basic writings and speeches of the Chinese Communist leaders emphasize flexibility and maneuverability much more than did Stalin and his lieutenants. Mao's famous statement, "A revolution wanders where it can, retreats before superior forces, advances where it has room," supplies a key to much of his thinking. His basic theoretical essay, "On Contradition," written in 1937, stresses that "the most essential thing in Marxism" is not the doctrinaire application of set rules but "the concrete analysis of concrete conditions." In that essay he criticizes the mechanical application of Marxist materialism and declares that "while we recognize that in the development of history as a whole it is material things that determine spiritual things and social existence that determines social consciousness, at the same time we also recognize and must recognize the reaction of spiritual things and social consciousness on social existence, and the reaction of the superstructure on the economic foundation." This is a remarkably moderate and balanced statement of economic determinism, one with which many Western thinkers would find it difficult to disagree.

Although Marxists denounce pragmatism as a "bourgeois" ideology, Mao's approach, within the limits of the basic and immovable long-term goal of a communist society, is a pragmatic one. He quotes with favor Lenin's statement that "Practice is higher than knowledge because it has not only the virtue of universality but also the virtue of immediate reality." Writing in *Look* in 1957, after a visit to Red China, American newspaperman Edmund Stevens wrote: "This much is certain: the Chinese have already demonstrated a degree of flexibility and realism far superior to that shown by other Communists."

Despite this basic tendency on the part of Chinese Communist thinking towards flexibility, it is pointed out that in the past year or so Mao's China has seized upon that side of Marxism which is most hostile to compromise, coexistence, and the peaceful development of social change. At least two New York *Times* headlines in recent months talk of Red China's "Hard Line," and a scholar at a recent gathering of Far East experts spoke of China's policy as one of "liberation" compared to Soviet Russia's program of "containment." These are only illustrative of a wide range of thought today, from the popular to the scholarly, emphasizing Communist China's special belligerency.

An examination of Chinese Communist statements—in translations of articles from the *Jen-min Jih-pao* or *Peoples Daily* (the official party newspaper), from *Red Flag* (the party's theoretical journal), and other mainland publications—reveals that Western interpretations of China's theoretical position contain some truth and a great deal of exaggeration. To say, as the New York *Times* recently paraphrased a statement by Britain's Foreign Secretary Lord Home, that China has been "publicly proclaiming its belief in war" is to distort seriously the Chinese position. At no time have they advocated the launching of war as a means of achieving socialism, although they have said they are not afraid of war. They have expressed support for revolutionary uprisings, but have criticized the idea of "exporting revolution." And their relatively infrequent statements on these matters need to be seen in the context of constant repetition of the assertion that they want to remain at peace.

The distinction between the Chinese position and that of the

Soviet Union is in whether to emphasize this or that element in the bundle of tactics which both countries approve. This bundle ranges from negotiation through ideological-political struggle to the giving of aid to "national liberation" movements, but does not include the initiation of war. The word "struggle" in Communist terminology has multifold ramifications, but Western observers have a tendency to narrowly interpret it as meaning the use of arms.

The Chinese these days emphasize negotiations less and political pressure more, organizing the masses from below rather than dealing with bourgeois leaders. Their emphasis is based on the contention that the "imperialist powers" and particularly the United States are more warlike than the Soviet Union realizes. They stress the warring tendencies of capitalist powers in their "imperialist" phase. Throughout, their manner is defensive and one of warning. This has sometimes been coupled with a bravado in the face of atomic war, a declaration that the relationship of forces in the world has changed in favor of the Communists ("The East Wind prevails over the West Wind") and that the launching of war by the United States would bring its defeat.

While the Soviets emphasize the mutuality of total destruction in an atomic war, the Chinese Communists have at times made the claim that such a war would end capitalism and that out of the ruins a socialist world would emerge. That they are not as scared as the rest of us at the prospects of atomic war seems to put them in the camp of American thinkers like Herman Kahn or Thomas Schelling, who also urge us not to think only in terms of annihilation. This makes them deplorably callous, but it does not make them desirous of war. The tone of the Chinese Communist exhortations, addressed to their own people, seems to be one of reassurance, a kind of spine-stiffening pep talk to a people conscious of its lack of atomic weapons.

It has been said that they adhere to the doctrine of the inevitability of war, but this too is a distortion of their position, which is really ambiguous. On the one hand they have cited the Leninist doctrine that so long as imperialism exists there is a great danger of war, with the line between "great danger" and "inevitability" hazy in their utterances. Yet they have also said, as in a *Peoples Daily* editorial of January, 1961, that the forces of socialism are strong enough to prevent another war.

A detailed survey of Sino-Soviet ideological differences was made recently by Professor Pichon Loh, in a paper read before the Association for Asian Studies. Professor Loh notes eight public occasions for expressions of disagreement, from the 1957 Moscow Conference of Communist Parties to the 1960 Conference. He finds definite differences in a number of their positions but says these are largely differences in emphasis, existing within an institutional framework of international Communist unity. Professor Loh concludes:

> In spite of the theoretical rigidity and aggressive posture of the Chinese Communists at the present time, the Party owes its power position not to "irresponsible Blanquism" (a charge made by the Russians), but to the exploitation and manipulation of human and material factors within the limits of the possible. The Chinese Communists are skilled practitioners of the dexterous art of "two-steps-forward, one-step-backward." The abolition of the Soviet government in Yenan in 1937 and the truce agreements with the Kuomintang in 1946 are classic examples of their undogmatic approach to concrete situations.

It is probably our own lack of a consistent policy of international behavior, and a desperate need for some way out of the Cold War, which lead our scholars and analysts to search eagerly for Sino-Soviet differences, and to magnify them, seeing China as "leftist" and Russia as "centrist." But as Richard Lowenthal shows in a recent issue of *The China Quarterly*, both the Soviet Union and China moved towards closing the narrow gap between their positions even before the much-publicized Moscow Declaration of 1960. That world Communism is now polycentric, as Lowenthal points out, is true, and it indicates the continual possibility of differences between Russian and Chinese tactics. (It is also a healthy counterbalance to the monolithic character of internal Communist opinion.) But we should recognize that these two centers, themselves constantly shifting, retain their position on that great spinning platter which is Marxist ideology, quite a different platter from the one on which spin the polycenters of the Western world.

The view of the Chinese as "leftists" goes so far as to link them with Trotskyism through their use of the term "permanent revolution" (as Donald S. Zagoria does in one issue of *Problems of Communism*). But, in an unpublished French manuscript which collects the pertinent Chinese documents on the doctrine of per-

manent revolution, Stuart R. Schram has pointed out that there are "some very definite differences" between the Chinese interpretation and Trotsky's. And an examination of Liu Shao Ch'i's 1958 discussion of the doctrine reveals it as simply a statement of the ongoing nature of revolution, the need to move from one stage to the next without losing opportunities. This is an idea that any Soviet leader would accept and does not really go beyond the accustomed Marxian fervor.

But what of actual Chinese practice? Surely what they *do* is more important than what they say.

Here we run into an anomaly in our own behavior towards the Communists. When their words are moderate, we are suspicious, but when they are tough we believe them. When their deeds are nasty, we note them. When they make a conciliatory move, we say they don't mean it and point to Marxist theory. We switch from believing statements to believing practice, depending on which is politically expedient for us. We often seem the spoiled children of international politics.

The assumption I am making about the relationship of practice to theory is that both need to be taken into account, that theory is not an infallible guide to Communist action, because Marxist theory is broad enough to leave room for all sorts of actions; yet the theory is definite enough in its broad outline to serve as a general guide and, in the absence of overriding immediate pressures, to determine the direction of Communist conduct. The problem with depending on theory is that it omits all the possible zigs and zags Communist China may take. The problem with only viewing practice is that we may be looking at one zig or one zag of a long-term pattern which is only comprehensible in the light of theoretical goals. This said, let us look at the behavior of Communist China since 1949, estimating in each area the extent of orthodoxy, of inflexibility, of "leftism" and fanaticism.

It has already been noted many times (most pointedly by Benjamin Schwartz in *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*) that the seizure of power by the Communists in China was done with a dependence on the peasantry that represented a variation from orthodox Marxist theory, which emphasizes the leadership of the proletariat. The fact that there can be found in the writings of

Marx and Lenin some theoretical justification for this tactic (as Karl Wittfogel has documented) does not diminish its character as a bold departure from the Soviet model and from the dominant trend of Marxian theorizing about the taking of power. The Chinese Communists, in their road-to-power dealings with the Kuomintang and their wooing of the Chinese peasants, showed a mastery of tactical maneuver, of alternating thrust and compromise, which left Stalin rather far behind, and he consequently underestimated their capacity to win.

Another innovation was Mao's conception of a "New Democracy" as a transition to socialism, involving the novel idea (to Marxists) of multi-class participation in government. Connected with this is the actual practice, still in effect, of allowing non-Communist political organizations to exist. This indicates a willingness to experiment with new forms and procedures while holding to the fundamental fact of undisputed leadership by the Communist Party.

Inner-party struggle in the Chinese Communist Party, which is as mysterious in its details as inner-party struggle anywhere (we are not always sure what happens internally in Western parties), does not seem to have been as ruthless, certainly not as bloody, as those in the Soviet Union. We have had no Stalin-type purges in the Chinese Communist Party, no mass executions of opposition faction leaders. Whatever has been done to ensure undeviating adherence to "the line," it seems to have been a less violent process than in Russia.

While the Chinese methods are obnoxious to all of us who value individual freedom, at least "thought reform" can be undone (as Robert Lifton has shown in *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism*) while death is so far irremediable. That the Chinese Communists have no aversion to murder is clear from their liquidation of huge numbers of "counter-revolutionaries" in the first few years after taking power. However, that phase seems to be over, and the evidence thus far indicates that they are adhering to their plan for winning mass support through indoctrination.

Their economic policies, while holding to the long-term goals of socialized industry and collectivized agriculture, have shown a readiness to shift when necessary, to move "right" or "left" depend-

ing on the circumstances. Rather than mechanically holding to the orthodox socialist scheme of centralized large-scale industry, the Chinese Communist leaders have encouraged the widespread development of small, local industrial plants. Studies by economist Alexander Eckstein show that they have adopted the innovation of "technological dualism," using high-labor ratios in rural areas and on public works projects, while retaining high-capital ratios in key industrial sectors. Western economists have recommended this as a device for under-developed countries where much underemployed labor exists, and while the Communists would certainly not be proud of this coincidence between bourgeois theory and Marxist practice, their policy does show an experimentalism which is remarkable.

The most radical move of the Chinese, admittedly an overwhelming and all-embracing social phenomenon, was their transformation of both rural and urban life into the national system of communes. Here they have clearly moved beyond the Soviets towards social and economic extremism. Yet even this was not instituted in dogmatic pursuit of a predetermined Marxist goal, but as a pragmatic response to specific conditions in China as they developed in the mid 1950's. Key causal factors were the need to mobilize rural labor in the most efficient way (in accordance with the above-described idea of technological dualism) and the problem of political control for a vast population. And yet they have recently shown a willingness to modify the commune system in the face of agricultural troubles.

While communes represent a jump to the left of Soviet Russia, we should keep in mind that (despite Khrushchev's apparent skepticism about the Chinese experiment) communal society is still the Soviet goal, not merely preserved in Marxist tomes and forgotten, but kept alive in the Soviet press. In a recent issue of *Novy Mir*, Academician S. Strumilin, a leading Soviet economist, wrote a long article describing the communist society of the future as a national system of "dwelling and working communes." He envisions communes linked together for purposes of economic planning, but voluntarily constituted and enjoying a great deal of independence. It appears that the Chinese adoption of communes is

both a reaction to immediate needs and in concordance with long-term Marxian theory as envisioned also by the Soviet Union.

Although the Marxian position on the family is not systematized, statements in the *Communist Manifesto* and in Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* forecast drastic changes in the post-bourgeois family structure. Yet the fate of the traditional family in Communist China has not been subject to any mechanical application of preconceived ideas but to a shifting series of reforms. To a great extent, these reforms continue a process already under way (as Morton J. Levy and C. K. Yang have noted in their studies of the Chinese family) in the early part of this century. No one wanted a more drastic overhauling of the traditional family system in China than non-Communist Chinese liberals. The Communists have combined that necessary modernization of the family required by any industrial society with the particular needs of their own political goals.

The submission of theoretical formulations to practical need is shown by the fact that Communist leaders, while denouncing the Malthusian fear of overpopulation as a failure to recognize the value-begetting quality of human labor, at the same time have encouraged the widespread use of contraceptive devices. They have shifted from the stress on the new liberal family relationships to exhortations for more careful divorce procedure to stabilize family life. As one editorial in *Kwang-Ming Jih-pao* put it, a couple had rushed to get a divorce but then found "they were dreaming the same dream in separate beds."

Party officials in the provinces have at times interfered with marriages on political grounds. A *Peoples Daily* article of early 1957 denounced such interference, saying: "Failing to understand correctly the Party's policy of freedom of marriage, these people think that Party organizations and Party leaders may, like feudal clans and feudal patriarchs, control or interfere with the marriages of Party members and the masses in general in any way they please." In a society where local Communist Party leadership is occupationally diseased with the "iron law of oligarchy," such transgressions will probably continue, yet apparently there are countervailing forces to mitigate political interference in family life.

Are the Chinese at this point more ruthless than the Russians in suppressing freedom of expression? Probably. They have not taken steps comparable to the Soviet Union in easing censorship of foreign dispatches, allowing visitors to enter the country, printing statements of Western leaders. Yet it seems reasonable to believe that this may be due to their immediate situation as a newly-sprung, fervent revolutionary nation, still surrounded, in their view, by predatory enemies, still harassed on their coastline by the "imperialist powers," rather than to any permanent resistance to softening.

The important thing about the Hundred Flowers period of free speech in early 1957 is not that it was retracted but that it was allowed to take place. The best available evidence indicates that Mao genuinely wanted to "let a hundred flowers bloom, a hundred schools of thought contend" but that he did not expect the rush of harsh criticism that resulted (just as Khrushchev and company underestimated the Hungarian reaction) and then felt compelled to retreat. Despite the crackdown, Communist leaders still claim that the "hundred flowers" principle operates, and although no one seems ready to risk his neck or his career by testing it, the fact that a period of free criticism once existed suggests it can come again. Mao's willingness to venture down new roads and to take risks is evident in the whole episode.

Does flexibility in domestic policy guarantee the same approach in foreign policy? Hardly. But if there is no one-to-one carryover between them, it is also clear that the relationship is not simply haphazard. We have the immediate example of Khrushchev's Russia showing more conciliatory attitudes abroad along with an easing-up at home.

A survey of Chinese foreign policy in the twelve years of Communist rule reveals a behavior pattern which is consistent only in its variability. The Chinese seem to be aiming at the neutralization of countries on their perimeter through diplomacy, giving support to the "nationalist bourgeoisie" so long as it remains friendly (as in Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal). At the same time, they are willing to encourage or give indirect aid to political-military moves by local Communists where control is uncertain and there is a possibility of a Communist victory (as in Laos and Vietnam). And in situations where military threat is too close for

comfort, they will engage in direct armed action, as they did in Korea and in the case of the offshore islands. The keynote is flexibility.

It was China's direct engagement with American soldiers on the bloody Korean peninsula which still feeds Congressional speeches against recognition and editorial denunciation in our press. But the weight of the evidence indicates that her role in Korea was quite different than the public image has it. As Allen Whiting has indicated in his Rand Corporation study, *China Crosses the Yalu*, the Chinese apparently did not play a part in the initiation of the North Korean attack and intervened only at the very last moment, with American troops approaching their territory, after strong attempts through diplomatic channels to prevent armed clash with the United States. The Chinese role in Korea was primarily a defensive one, undertaken reluctantly, Whiting's book suggests.

The Chinese posture today as international radicals should be seen in an overall historical context which includes their early years of power in Yenan, when they were viewed as the most moderate Communists in the world. Their current belligerence should be placed alongside the fact that their pact with India in 1954 first expressed the idea of "peaceful coexistence," that at Bandung in the following year they were most amenable to compromise, and that, as Pinchon Loh notes, they had held 103 meetings on the ambassadorial level with their chief foe, the United States, by 1961. Those talks in Warsaw continue.

The Chinese have concluded friendly agreements with Indonesia on the overseas Chinese there, and with Burma on border problems, in which they made significant concessions. They seem to have respected the 1954 Geneva agreement on the neutralization of Laos more carefully than the United States. Their emphasis on economic aid is indicated by the startling fact that China, overpopulated and economically harassed, has been giving more foreign aid than it has received. (It gave over six hundred million dollars in its first five year plan.)

I am not attempting here to counter one false image with another, to present the Chinese Communists as peace-loving, amicable, and just misunderstood. But only a balanced picture can enable us to deal effectively with China. Allen Whiting's book

makes clear that in Korea it was a terrible failure of communication, the inability to perceive one another cooly and realistically, that led to disaster and the loss of thousands of lives on both sides. An appraisal which has historical perspective can prevent us from falling victim to the impact of the momentary.

A recent analysis of the Chinese Communist approach to neutralism by A. M. Halpern of the Rand Corporation concentrates on their statements rather than their behavior because, as he says, their behavior "yields a picture of inconsistency and of severe and sudden fluctuations." Although Halpern sees the "native radicals" in the Chinese Communist leadership as having gained ascendency, he refers several times to their "pragmatic approach." In summing up the "general design" of Chinese foreign policy up to December, 1960, he finds a potpourri of tactics, including "political and military struggle . . . conciliatory diplomacy . . . political bargaining."

In *Communist China and Asia*, perhaps the most solidly-researched study yet done of mainland policy, A. Doak Barnett makes a statement in relation to the communes which is applicable to all of Communist China's theory and practice: "The Chinese Communists have shown considerable flexibility and adaptability in the past and have modified their policies when it was necessary to take into account political realities."

If, as we have tried to show, the Chinese Communists are not inherently intransigent and dogmatic, if they are in fact capable of swift change and adaptation to circumstances, then their present attitude of toughness may be due to immediate conditions which deserve exploration. What these conditions are is not hard to see: they are engaged in the gargantuan feat of converting a fifth of the world's people into a modern, literate, industrialized society, achieving an unprecedented rate of economic growth virtually by themselves; they are subject to the anxieties, stresses, suspicions of any nation ruled by a party dictatorship and by an official ideology; they have been engaged in life-and-death struggle with single and multiple enemies continuously for over thirty years; the islands ringing their coast are bristling with the military installations of a powerful and hostile power—the United States.

In explaining the Chinese idea of "permanent revolution," of not wasting a moment in stepping or "leaping" from one stage to another, Stuart Schram takes note of their long siege against a hostile world: "In this regard, the fundamental fact appears to be . . . that the Chinese Communists were engaged in armed struggle for more than twenty years before taking power, and that they have found themselves since then the object of permanent hostility on the part of most western countries, and especially the United States."

Whether or not this hostility on the part of the West is a justified moral reaction to Chinese acts is a misleading directive for policy today. There is a paradox in social action, in the hard fact that the reaction which is natural and "justified" in terms of bad acts already committed is often by its very nature productive of more such acts; there is often a confusion between what is needed as a preventive against social evil and what is needed to express indignation. Mechanical reaction to the past and solution for the future may be irreconcilably opposed, and our China policy has been geared to the past.

Not only is our posture of hostility unrealistic, past-centered, and future-periling, but it involves another paradox: that policies which are pursued to put Communist China out of business are the very ones which will put us in the worst position if she stays in business. We have never made a clean break with our past assumption that Communism can be dislodged in China; Chiang Kai-shek on Taiwan and his representatives in the U.N. are symbols of this. We are like a man in a cave with a bear who can only wound the bear but cannot kill her, who can keep her at bay by a posture of aggressiveness but only at the risk of permanent sleeplessness, and does not see the possibility (because who wants to live with a bear?) of mollifying her, not with a show of weakness, but of friendliness, not as a gesture of approval of bears in general, but as a recognition of this one's irremediable existence.

It is pride-wounding to compare ourselves to China, but we need to recall how Alexis de Tocqueville had to explain to the conservative classes of Europe that the United States—young, crude, aggressive, equalitarian, with the perplexing mixture of democracy for ten million of its inhabitants and slavery for three million—was in the world to stay and could perhaps be changed somewhat, but

not obliterated. We have not yet faced this fact in relation to Communist China.

We have taken a rather ahistorical view of the Chinese revolution, forgetting that most social revolutions in world history have been accompanied by a sense of insecurity, a special militancy, an obsessive fear of counter-revolution, an anxiety to secure borders against attack. The French, Russian, and American Revolutions all exhibited such symptoms. The maintenence of British forts in America's Northwest territory after the Revolution was seen as a direct threat to our nation's security. American expansionism was rife in this period, with Andrew Jackson marching into Florida, with brutal expeditions against the Indians, with the cries of the "war hawks" in Congress, with demands for the annexation of Canada.

Our justified abhorrence of totalitarian methods within China need not blind us to the fact that certain realities of national self-respect must be faced. China will be a great power in Asia—indeed, the greatest power—and this must be acknowledged. Her influence on peripheral nations will be considerable, as is Soviet Russia's on her borders and ours on Canada and Latin America. In the long run, Doak Barnett asserts, "the Chinese Communists cannot be denied the status of a large and strong power" and "if war is to be avoided, Communist China's basic security interests cannot be ignored." This brings up, whether we like it or not, the question of Taiwan.

In *The Prospects for Communist China*, W. W. Rostow, whose policy prescriptions are anything but "soft" towards the Communists, says (speaking in relation to Manchuria): ". . . given China's intrinsic weakness in the face of Russia or Japan, it is a fact which applied then, and applies now, that so long as the United States does not regard the integrity of China's borders as a matter of high American strategic interest, the American ability to influence the course of Chinese events is limited." And the noted geographer George Cressey writes: "Wherever feasible, large and populous continental areas should enjoy free access to the high seas. On this basis, small screening islands should be under the control of the mainland. For the United States this means Hawaii and the

military concessions in Bermuda. . . . In China this security to the ocean includes Taiwan. . . ."

Taiwan is as as much a part of China as Manchuria, Mongolia, and Sinkiang, all of which have their own ethnic distinction and historically have been in and out of Chinese control; we are on poor ground when we try to dispute this. The military argument that the United States needs Taiwan for defense of the rest of Asia is emphatically denied by geography and by the nature of warfare today. The Chinese could not conceivably employ a strategy of island-hopping to take the Philippines or Japan. In the event of large-scale warfare between the United States and China—and any Chinese attack on the Philippines or Japan or Indonesia would bring large-scale war—Taiwan would be inconsequential. On four occasions between 1948 and 1950, according to Dean Acheson, top military leaders declared that Taiwan was not vital to American interests.

The island is really of no use to anyone in a military way except Chiang Kai-shek, and then only in connection with a dream—the reconquest of the mainland. The most sensible thing, involving no loss to either the United States or Communist China, would seem to be the demilitarization of Taiwan, leaving aside for the moment the question of political jurisdiction.

The real problem in connection with Taiwan is a psychological one, for its value in military or economic terms is small. The Communists need it as a symbol of national pride and we do not want to appear at any point to be making a concession to strength by surrendering it. Therefore, what is required is a solution which demilitarizes Taiwan—thus removing it as a possible starting-place for war—and yet satisfies the face-saving needs of both powers involved. This points to a *quid pro quo* in which we give up both Chiang and armaments on Taiwan (without necessarily turning the island over to the Communists as an administrative entity, and certainly not as a military base) and require the Chinese in return to do something we want.

Not from the standpoint of military leaders (who count gains in terms of territory, bases, armaments), but from the standpoint of democracy and humanity, which need again to be the measure for

American policy, the most important thing by far which we can wrest from the Chinese is an agreement on nuclear weapons and general disarmament. Chinese participation in an overall disarmament plan, or in a nuclear-free Pacific situation, is far more valuable to world peace than American military bases on Taiwan. With this as a starting point, with both demilitarization of Taiwan and deatomization of the Pacific agreed on, we could leave the question of the political rule of Taiwan as an area of bargaining. Independence, U. N. jurisdiction, and Asia-neutral trusteeship are some possible solutions. An agreement to reconsider political jurisdiction after ten years might allow Communist China to maintain self-respect at home.

The only ones to suffer from such an agreement would be atom-fanciers inside China, military men in the United States, and Chiang Kai-shek. Our consciences need bother us little about these elements, for none of them represent the values inherent in the American democratic ideal or in the vision of a peaceful world. (As part of the agreement, however, we would need to safeguard egress from Taiwan for anyone who wanted it.) We cannot for long keep Taiwan from her natural economic and cultural relationship with the mainland; our principal aim should be to remove her as a source of international tension and to make the most capital out of an inevitable concession.

Looking around for another way to cut the ground under current Chinese toughness without any display of weakness, we come to the matter of contact and communication with the West. The Soviet Union's relaxation of repression in many spheres has coincided with the great growth of Western contacts, and whether or not there is a direct and clearcut causal relation, the probability is, buttressed by history, logic, and social psychology, that increased contact will have a softening effect on the Communists.

The success of thought control, Robert Lifton has shown, is directly dependent on the extent to which the individual can be isolated. The puncturing of isolation as a medicine for totalitarianism is both positive in its effects and soothing as it operates, unlike military action, ideological denunciation, and economic reprisal.

This will require stifling the paranoia of the House Un-American Activities Committee, the xenophobia of the House Immi-

gration Committee, and the nervousness of the Senate Internal Security Committee. But surely, whatever "risks" there are in large-scale exchange of ideas are more real for the Communists than for us. One concrete step would be for us to repeal the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act, which is the most blatant piece of racist legislation on our national statute books, particularly offensive to Orientals.

The third area in which we can do something to soften Red China is in economic relations. We still hold to the naive view that we can hurt the Communists by withholding economic contact. The evidence is that, whatever we do, China will develop economically into a great power. She will become an industrialized nation, and standards of living will rise. Her economic progress so far has been phenomenal, and the economists of underdevelopment, like Wilfred Malenbaum of the University of Pennsylvania, have pointed again and again to her rate of growth compared to the snails-pace of India. When China does achieve significantly higher living standards she will be able to say: "We did it without any aid from the West."

In this light, President Kennedy's failure to offer food during the recent severe food-shortage in China was not only inexcusable from a humanitarian point of view (punishing starving Chinese peasants for the sins of the Communist hierarchy), but politically maladroit. His excuse, that the Communists would have refused, was weak. Perhaps they would have. But we should have offered.

There is increasing evidence that a higher standard of living brings a predisposition to political democracy, and that poor economic conditions enable totalitarianism to tighten its grip. The sharp upturn in Soviet living standards these past five years has coincided with the loosening of dictatorial controls. It is always much easier to justify restriction of freedom of expression when there is a crisis to point to, either internal or external. So if we are really interested in correction and not in revenge, we would do well to help China in her economic growth. This too is a psychological barrier for us, comparable to the one communities had to cross when they began to accept the idea that rat-infested prison cells were satisfying as vengeance but not effective as spurs to good behavior.

To recapitulate: we need to restructure our image of the Chinese Communists. They are not possessed of some incorrigible

"Oriental despotism" which arises inescapably from either their Chinese heritage or their Marxist ideology. Both their words and their actions over the years have revealed them to be cool and calculating, ruthless but rational, and quite flexible. They are not kind, good, or gentle. But neither are the other nations of this world, especially those recently emerged from foreign domination and possessed of a new sense of power. They are as capable of compromise and peaceful negotiation as they are of war. They remain committed to a Communist world. But they believe this will come about through our ineptitude, not through military conquest on their part. So far, they seem to be right.

Our policy towards Communist China has been narrow, gross, inflexible—based on militaristic thinking and predicated on vengeance rather than on correction. Liberating ourselves from the old image will enable us to choose from a wide range of possible actions in regard to China, matching her flexibility with ours, and therefore finding meeting grounds where none existed before.

Comment

■ Howard Zinn has performed a substantial service in his analysis of the present dilemma of United States China policy. His incisive insight is enhanced by an engaging quality of imagery and wit. He is constructively provocative in his diagnosis and creatively remedial in his prescription. Responding in the same spirit he has demonstrated, it seems appropriate to comment briefly on his article, giving further emphasis to certain of his points and questioning certain others to give more perspective to the picture he presents.

Surely one of the most difficult tasks facing any analyst of the Chinese scene today is to evaluate properly the legacy of the past in its effects upon the present. In no case is this more difficult than in viewing policy decisions in governmental action. In the study of particular individuals it is difficult enough, but here one has the writings and speeches of the man and can trace ideas directly. In the broader context of national policy and the motivation of collective leadership, such documentary guidelines are far less distinct, and judgment becomes even more tenuous and imprecise. Professor Zinn is to be complimented

on his attempt to do this. That his treatment of Confucianism and its influence upon present leadership in Communist China is not completely satisfactory is evidence only of the difficulty of the task. Even those most steeped in the intellectual history of modern China continue to eschew definitive statements of judgment.

Several aspects of Professor Zinn's treatment of the heritage of Confucianism need brief comment. First, he refers to K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao as nationalist reformers in the Confucian tradition. If we are to retain some precision in the use of the word "nationalism," it seems unwarranted to apply it to reformers or movements toward reform within the context of the traditional Chinese state. In the revolutionary movement of Sen Yat-sen, nationalism as we have known it in the West began to take shape. However, not until the May 4th student movement of 1919 do we see the gathering of forces and definition of program which can truly be labeled "nationalist."

The second area of Professor Zinn's discussion of Confucianism which bears comment is his statement that Confucianism is passive, conservative, and resistant to change, but not dogmatic and intransigent. It was conservative and resistant to change; it was not passive. There has been a tendency in the West to interpret Chinese culture as passive—even pacifist. This is not accurate. The Confucian scholar-official was a vigorous civil servant able to deal actively with a wide range of tasks (e.g. state finance, flood control, and even "barbarian" relations). Commissioner Lin's handling of the opium question in Canton in 1839 was in the vigorous Confucian tradition.

Perhaps a better word than "compromise" to characterize Confucianism would be the word "harmony." In order to achieve harmony, compromise may be necessary, but such compromise was likely to be not a blending of old and new, but a definition of any new elements within the context of the old, thus forcing the new element into the old mold. The Confucian demand for harmony was not necessarily a call for the give and take of the open mind and the flexible interpretation. One of the features of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1911) was the very strictness of its orthodoxy and its demand for conformity in scholarship. Even K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao in their attempts to reinterpret Confucianism bowed to this need for retaining the old mold. In the sense that it demanded vigorous action and allowed for great flexibility within the established mold, Confucian orthodoxy and Marxian orthodoxy have much in common. To suggest that Confucianism was thereby not dogmatic nor intransigent is to mislead us in our evaluation of the tradition.

A factor which Professor Zinn has not mentioned, but which clearly must be recognized, is the idea of China as the central kingdom. This concept is embedded in Confucianism, though it apparently predates the development of Confucian thought. It has been the single most important determining factor in the Chinese world view throughout historical times. It seems clear that it continues to have an important place at least unconsciously in the attitude of most Chinese—and certainly the Communist Chinese—toward the rest of the world. This concept states that China is the political and cultural center of the universe; that all peoples and all areas beyond the borders of China proper are barbarian. We in the West with our own ethnocentrism should be able to understand this idea, if we care to, since it is the obverse of our own image of the world. We do not need to accept the Chinese world view, but we must recognize it as an important element and take it into account in our evaluation of the international scene and in our policy planning. We will surely not eliminate it by an arrogant assertion of our own brand of ethnocentrism. Recognition of this world view does not, however, lead inevitably to anticipation of military conflict between China and the West. It may lead to this unless we find a more constructive arena for hammering out a *modus vivendi.*

A third point that Professor Zinn makes is that, since the present leaders of mainland China were raised in an environment which was steeped in Confucian thought, there is bound to be a substantial legacy of this thought in their own approach to China's internal problems and her relations to the West. We must recognize the role of environment in influencing current attitudes among the leaders of the Communist Party. Yet even the oldest of the Chinese Communist leaders (Mao Tse-tung and Chu Teh) were born shortly before the turn of the century. Thus their formative years cover the period of the breakdown of the Confucian state, and their years of higher education occurred during the period of the emphatic and vigorous rejection of the Confucian approach to life. While they had contact in their youth with many people steeped in the Confucian tradition, it would seem more accurate to emphasize that they were products of the reaction to Confucianism. They, themselves, were caught up in this movement. Their teachers and leaders were the men who were consciously rejecting the tradition. We need, therefore, to be cautious in estimating how deeply they are Confucian in their background and outlook.

Having raised questions about some of the emphasis which Professor Zinn gives to the role of the Confucian tradition, let me now turn to underline certain of the points which he makes about Marxism, Maoism,

and foreign policy. Professor Zinn very rightly takes us to task for accepting statements of dogma made by Communists at one point and then suddenly pointing to what they do in practice at another, depending upon which emphasis will paint them the blackest and make them seem most inimical to our own policy objectives. He has not given us a formula for evaluating these two elements, but he has given us guidelines and warned us of a very dangerous trap into which our mass media and our political commentators too often fall. Further, Professor Zinn's analysis of Maoism in its political, economic, military, and international expressions seems to me to be balanced and judicious in its emphasis. We must see the flexibility of the regime in its use of variety in political structure, in its willingness to initiate drastic economic reform, and in its retreat when it becomes apparent that it has gone too far. We are clearly seeing this happen on the Mainland today in Chinese Communist policy toward communes. Professor Zinn is also right in urging us to realize the wide latitude in meaning given to the word "struggle" in Communist terminology and not insist on interpreting it as military struggle alone.

In the field of foreign policy, Professor Zinn has reminded us of the hoax of military strategy which has been foisted upon the American people in the argument which presents Formosa as an essential bastian of the American defense perimeter. Similarly he has put into proper perspective our attitude toward the Chinese Communists by reminding us of the experience of the French and American Revolutions. Unquestionably the Chinese Communist regime presents a threat to American foreign policy. However, if, in Professor Zinn's metaphor, we cannot kill the bear, would it not be less suicidal a policy to attempt some other form of dealing with it?

In reading Professor Zinn's article, one is struck by certain minor matters of presentation. It is unfortunate that he digressed to insert a paragraph of emotion-laden comment on such matters as the House Un-American Activities Committee. We can hope that his readers, of whatever political persuasion, will not be tempted to write off his insightful analysis because of this insertion. Speaking more broadly as he piles argument on top of argument, there is some feeling that "thou dost protest too strongly." However, his points are well made and each adds weight to his argument.

Professor Zinn has presented a clear, forceful, disturbing, and all too convincing indictment of our policy towards Communist China. As he says, "This policy has been narrow, gross, inflexible, based on militaristic thinking and predicated on vengeance rather than on correction." We

can hope that through such efforts as his, we shall liberate ourselves from the old image and choose more wisely from a wider range of possible actions. Surely we can be more flexible than we have been in the past. Just as surely we must be more creative in finding a way to exist with a regime which controls one-fourth of the world's population.

—JACKSON H. BAILEY

The Wisdom of Amnesia

By HELEN SUE ISELY

You are the wise one
shedding your reptile skin,
resparking innocence
on a yearly basis.

Gone: the scar of thorn
the rip of near-death
conjugal evidence
even the faded pattern.

Your blemishes crisp
the way leaves lisp
shrinking their bad dream
into the earth's seam.

My personal ache is this:
when my courage bleeds,
its blood spills warm.

HELEN SUE ISELY's poems have appeared widely in the literary journals. Her last appearance on these pages was in the Summer '60 issue.

Athens: City of Dionysus

By FREDERIC WILL

■ As early as Homer's day, and later, the Greeks worshipped the god Dionysus, that complex god of passion, frivolity, and simple intoxication. His worshippers justified his whole unrespectable existence: their alcoholically exalted dance-rituals were to emerge into the first tragedy and comedy. Out of the whipped-up chaos of their feelings one of the most disciplined and profound efforts of man's spirit evolved. Much less has since emerged from the worship of Dionysus among the people of the eastern Mediterranean. Yet that worship *has* been a life-affirming and perpetuating force.

Many a Greek taverna table is still the altar of the Dionysiac religion, the center of an indomitable secular ritual. The wine and the dancing are different now, but who can say that the spirit of the ritual is different? Suppose that the dancers, on a particular evening, are soldiers, as often happens in Athens. Several of them, in separate groups, may have come to the *Nuktopoles* after dinner to drink wine, eat cheese, and talk. These soldiers generally wear olive-green uniforms, with berets at the top and high leather boots at the bottom. They arrive late, after ten, at the *Nuktopoles,* because the music doesn't start until then. The taverna is casual. The four instrumentalists and the singer have been eating before they enter: they emerge from the back of the taverna chewing, and walk through the warm, low-ceilinged basement room to the stand where they will play. Neither the soldiers nor anyone else—the lovers or

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the chattering old men—pay much attention. No doubt the customers see nothing piquant in the stubby, bosomy woman who will sing, or the assortment of mustached men who begin to tune up their instruments. It is always hard to know what the foreigner thinks of his own people.

Greek soldiers are cliquish together. At each table they talk gaily, excitedly to one another. In one sense they seem to act like school children, trading gossip and joking with naive vitality. Like school children they are exclusive: sitting in the taverna with them, one feels strangely shut out, more, that is, than from most Greeks. One must see these men in action to understand them (and the world knows from the last war how understandable the action of such men can be). Not long after the musicians enter, in fact, the soldiers begin to tap their boots on the wooden floor. Outside, perhaps, blundering Ford taxis are passing. From nearby Omonoia Square there may be a muffled noise of the Saturday night crowd, the single sound made by a horde of separate people. But inside, a more precise rhythm hesitantly forms itself from table to table like the still distant, growing convergence of drums in the jungle. The soldiers are speaking to one another.

The third piece to be played is a *syrto*. The *bouzouki* is the dominant instrument now. It is a four-stringed guitar from which distorted and passionate notes can be twanged. For leading hard-stepping dances it is perfect: the other instruments are violin-like strings and perhaps a clarinet. The *bouzouki* bears the thread of passion like an electric wire. The soldiers rise to its sounds, and by tacit consent the other customers draw back from the center of the room, leaving a space for dancing. It is all reminiscent of the orchestra-area in those earliest Greek choral dances, those areas that were to be stages for tragedy later. Now with the naturalness of children the defenders of Greece gather in this basement *orchestra,* making themselves a chain of held hands. For a moment they test the chain's strength, flexing and relaxing their arms. They are handsome on this verge of their *syrto*: short, strong, olive complexioned, as though their tough, favored fruit had become the substance of their skin; then they move together.

The *syrto* is a weaving-line dance, led by a man at one head of the line. (Is he a newer form of the *choregos,* who led those earlier

choral dances and became the first actor of tragedy?) The leader holds by a handkerchief to the man next to him, for a reason not apparent at first. At first there is simply a single current in motion, through the line: several steps to the right, fewer to the left, then a pause, then onward, in solid, emphatic time to the rhythm. The rhythm is potent, a kind of coronary violence. The clientele has turned to the center now; a few clap their hands in time. At last the leader leads.

Wrapping the held handkerchief tightly around his fist, he lets himself go into a squatting position, stamping the while. He is a living, flexible piston. The other links in this wild-headed chain move obediently around their core rhythm, following the leader as he bobs up, moves farther, squats, and stamps echoingly with his heel on the hollow floor. The man preserves grace, with violence. His motions are as disciplined as those of a ballet dancer. He sings inside his movement as the stuff in a good sonnet sings within its form. Even to one who doesn't know the pattern of the *syrto,* this man brings the feeling of form. Everyone is tired when *he* finishes, in an orgy of hopping and sweat that brings applause, in its final stages, from the discerning audience and renewed efforts from the lanky, puffing *bouzouki*-man himself.

Standing about afterwards, the soldiers smoke, laughing among themselves or with the musicians. One of them flirts with the chanteuse. One of the clientele sends up a decanter of resinated wine for the men, and they drink it down quickly, smacking their lips. While the mood of the event is heavy in the air, you think it over. The dance has been sudden. It is not that these soldiers are entertainers, here to entertain. They emerged from the group of the public, the you. Do you want, though, to pass public-spirited judgment on them? Saying, for instance: "How good it is for soldiers to occupy themselves so, rather than in brothels or bars." The comment sounds false. All such thought is banal but here it is especially out of place (whether true or false). This is not a hearty good time these men enjoy. There has been something demonic in the restaurant. You pour yourself more retsina and think: Dionysus is here.

As Nietzsche pointed out, Dionysus is not a Christian god. Nor are Dionysus' followers respectable. They never sit at deliberations

of the UN or attempt to improve social and economic relations in their communities. This is one reason why we, as members of a Western society, worship Christ, not Dionysus. (Christ is dangerous enough.) Every person retains a Dionysiac side, a wine-drunken twinge in some nook of his being. But society disapproves of these twinges.

I believe that Dionysus still lives in Greece, and in the best health. This despite the widespread effort, in Greece itself, to stamp him out. Many agencies contribute to the effort: the Orthodox church; the pro-American government; the pro-Western faction among the intellectuals, so many of whose training has been in western Europe or America. Even the common people, whose relatives have been to America to make money, and frequently failed, are contributing. The commoners hear the news about the "States." Then they try to bring the thoughts and moods of our fast-paced, mechanized society into their own existence. The *things* of that society are slower to come: Buicks and Bendixes themselves come later, but in the beginning is the "Buick mentality."

The effort in Greece to eject Dionysus is slow and has not yet succeeded. One could wish either that it would never succeed (preferable) or that it would succeed quickly. For the efforts at ejection frequently result in falseness. One sees pretentiousness often in Athens today—in the manners and gestures and words used to exorcise the demonic passions in the Greek blood and to lead the Greek into finer ways. The swankiest hotels of Athens show such pretension to a beautiful degree. They cater to the foreigner, and forsake the brethren. The help in those hotels is eager to please western Europeans, and, above all, Americans. But not Greeks. The humbler fellow-countrymen are looked down upon in such fine establishments. In foreign countries Greeks may cling to one another like blood relatives, but not at home. No country—not even ours—has suffered from a crueller civil war than Greece after the Second World War. This sometime hatred of one's fellows goes hand in hand with a flattering attitude toward the foreigner, particularly toward the powerful foreigner. Where there is a domestic perversion of nature, it can always be found to have some public form. Domestic perversion of this sort can be seen in some fashionable hotels in Athens.

The pretentiousness of such hotels lies in a conscious effort to turn the back on the Dionysiac spirit of the land, toward the more "enlightened," disciplined West. Elaborate and usually ludicrous efforts are made to speak the language of the clientele: French, German, English (unless the political situation is unfavorable). The foods served in the dining rooms are Westernized: roast beef, ice cream, rolls; thoroughly un-Dionysiac foods. The prices charged are astronomical, out of all relation to the Greek scale. The appointments of some of these hotels are floridly western-European, of others eclectically "modernistic," with a generous use of plastic and chromium. Nothing could be less authentically Greek. Even the public lavatories are carefully designated by the non-Greek symbols "W.C."

Such pretentiousness—fear of the Dionysiac in the blood—has, in fact, invaded the entire question of the use of language in Greece; that is, it has descended into a fundamental form of existence. This is serious. Extreme solicitousness to speak the foreigner's tongue is already a symptom of this invasion. If one happens to read a little Greek, ancient as well as modern, he may read the untranslated menus in the hotel: then he will understand better. And even more

if he should buy a conservative newspaper from the bellboy. He will find it written in a vocabulary and style strongly reminiscent of fifth-century B.C. Attic Greek. He will find few of the words which he is accustomed to from daily conversation or observation of signs in Athens. He will, in short, be reading that form of modern Greek known as the *katharevousa glossa,* the purified language. Dionysus never spoke such a language.

Katharevousa is the product of an artificial effort to return the Greek language to a purer form. At base, it was a political-nationalistic effort, begun in the nineteenth century, aimed at purging the language of foreign accretions and returning it to its fifth-century B.C. greatness. The development of modern Greek, as a language, *has* been tortuous and complex. Turkish, Arabic, and Bulgarian words have been added. The syntax has been loosened and remodelled through the centuries. For a long time only the conservative Greek orthodox church had bothered to keep the language in touch with its origins. It had done this, however, with great success. With the result that modern Greek, even in its unpurified form, is closer to fifth-century B.C. Attic Greek than modern Italian is to Latin. Modern and Attic Greek, in fact, seem as close as modern English and Chaucer's English, but the comparison here is difficult and beyond my competence. In any case, the overall conservatism of Greek is clear, and the church has done most to abet it, having moulded and straightened the language during the long centuries—virtually from the first to the nineteenth century after Christ—when religion was the main spiritual undertaking in Greece. It was on the ground of this overall linguistic conservatism that the defenders of *katharevousa* stood, when, in the early nineteenth century, they began a new effort to "purify" the language.

The ranks of the defenders were then largely made up of priests, journalists, professors, and professional men, the same groups who in this century have continued the effort—though the majority of them have already deserted. These groups formed an influential community in the last century, making themselves particularly felt in educational matters. Several generations of leading citizens were indoctrinated into a *katharevousa* viewpoint toward their language.

Strangely enough, it was also in the nineteenth century that the falseness of the purist doctrine was first understood, and a counter-

movement established. For Greece, that was the century of political self-liberation, of escape from what was, at least from the Greek view, a depressing Turkish occupation which had lasted for 400 years. Throughout Europe there was inflamed sympathy for Greece —in men of the caliber of Byron and Shelley—even though political maneuvering hindered adequate political assistance from reaching the hard-pressed nation. Most Greeks grew again into pride in their inheritance from the past. Many—this is important here—grew into creative pride in that past. Thinking of Aeschylus and Pericles, these men felt stronger, not weaker. They proceeded to establish their own independent and basically "democratic" monarchy which has served them fairly well to this day. At the same time, there was a groundswell of feeling for the creative and original potentialities of the national language. To some of these liberals the vital differences of that language from its matrix were seen as sources of pride: the hospitality of modern Greek to other languages was seen as inner generative power rather than eclecticism. The hyper-conservative influence of the church on language was deplored by many as sterile and denaturing and, in the last analysis, pretentious. The movement toward *demotike,* popular language, had begun, itself associated with political convictions, just as was the *katharevousa* movement.

Inspired partially by the poets—those "unacknowledged legislators of the world"—the *demotike* movement accelerated, until, at the present time, the linguistic battle is being won by the proponents of *demotike.* Many journalists, teachers, and professional men have converted to the popular language, though in greatly varying degrees. (A good royalist paper like *Kathemerine*—probably the one which is given to you by the bellboy in the swanky hotel—still clings fast to *katharevousa.*) The struggle has been hard, though. The first translation of the Bible into *demotike,* at the beginning of this century, was the cause of riots in the streets of Athens. Newspapers and creative works in the popular language have had to wait long for official, influential recognition. The poets and novelists have perhaps done most toward accomplishing this goal. The Greece of this century has produced, in *demotike,* some of the great modern poets: Palamas, Cavafis, Seferis. Nikos Katzantzakis, a powerful novelist, has won international, as well as national, recognition for the potentialities of *demotike.*

It seems fair to say, in fact, that the *katharevousa* which one reads on the menu in the fanciest Athenian hotels, or in the royalist newspaper, is a pretentious language. The authentic Greek does not speak that language and never did. There *is* a deep paradox, though, in the linguistic situation of Greece today. Linguistically speaking, modern Greece must find itself in its own way, as every individual must find himself anew in his own way. It must grow away from the form of the ancient Greek language. And that is what it is doing. Yet modern Greek is part of a long linguistic tradition and must grow originally *out of a language matrix*. The matrix is powerful and rich in this case. It must, or should, be employed without concession to pretense, that is, to mere form. Mere form is the worst crime against Dionysus.

If Dionysus speaks *demotike*, he does so nowhere more loudly or unpretentiously than in the street-markets of Athens. One of the longest and most vocal of those markets is on Sophocles Street. (Athena and Hermes Streets are also full.) In fact, the Sophocles Street emporium is simply a long line, on either side of the street, of private shops, the wares of which are generally displayed on the sidewalk. The proprietors also display themselves on the sidewalks. Standing alert for sales, they shout to one another, peer to peer, or to anonymous assistants circulating through the backs of the shops. Obscene, hearty, aggressive camaraderie is the spirit of business here.

Actually, little seems to be sold on this chaotic street. One seldom sees a customer. Most of the transactions are wholesale. Yet the goods are displayed as in any retail store: bags of various commodities wait. Grains predominate. There is a steady, dusty haze in the air from the tossed sacks, dropping with their dry barley, oats, wheat, flour, peas, beans. Thud after thud, the donkey-drawn carts or the small trucks bring up their wares, then leave.

Business begins at eight in Sophocles Street. The street is narrow, and already at that time it is crowded, with an almost entirely male crowd. (Only a rare Moll Flanders invades the gathering.) Trying to walk down the street, you find yourself dodging obstacles, abandoning the sidewalk, then guarding your steps in the cobblestone street. Every time you raise your eyes from your feet, you walk

into the street-car rails and stumble. Whenever you look too closely at any of the men by their shops, someone darts quickly across the street just in front of you. You are obsessed, deafened, stirred up by the street. The best tactic of all is to stop by one of the *koulouria*-vendors, on one of the street-corners, to munch a crusty, dry, ring-bun, and to watch the scene at leisure.

The farther you proceed down Sophocles Street, the more deeply involved you are with it. This walk continually transposes itself into spiritual metaphor: it is like the mind's progress into the inextricable jungle of Thomism, which exercises at every stage a more ramified and subtle control. From block to block, as you look and hear around you, you find yourself more sensually a part of the ambient energies. In a way there is no going back: you will never forget this situation. Only passivity has made it possible, as though you were temporarily just what Condillac had called man: a mere bundle of sense-organs. These environing sense-impressions will have cut deeply into your memory on Sophocles Street.

How fortunate, though, that in Greece there is a god for these so frequent moments. Only in the moment of feeling such contexts does Dionysus give himself back as life. When he does, he seems to dignify the sensuous moment with a peculiar transcendence. It takes a degree of imagination, of course, to recognize the god. On Sophocles Street his sign is grain, just as it was in the shadowy early centuries in Greece. All of this harvested grain lying around in sacks is simply part of the mystical, fertile body of the god himself, living in the spirit of the crops, once more to be eaten by his devotees until he rearises in their strengthened bodies, his spring. You are much less alone than you at first think, in this furious, dusty street. Dionysus is here too.

There are other street-markets in Athens, on Hermes Street, or on Aeolus and Athena Streets, in that cramped and vital area under the shadow, and to the north-east, of the Acropolis. Many of these markets are held only on occasional, appointed days and are a less formal or rooted feature of the city than is the Sophocles Street market. First discovery of the Athena market is often a revelation. This is a fruit market. Carts of fruit are wheeled alongside the curbs and sold to the housewives of the city. Confusion and added vitality

are contributed by the business in the regular shops which continue to do their various business as though no new market were going on directly in front of them.

The chief memory to hold from the fruit market is of its brilliance. Melons, oranges, lemons, bananas are piled onto the light carts like so many rind-bound concentrations of sunlight. Each pile seems to glow out from a luminous center inside it. Hawking these wares, by perfect contrast, stand black-dressed, austere peasant women or their hard-working husbands. Presumably, most of these people have come in only for the day, from outlying villages. Truck gardening is still mainly unmechanized in Greece. Fruits and vegetables are brought into the city on donkey carts, which enter early, and in great interweaving lines, along the roads northwest to Eleusis, or south to Sunium. Late in the night they leave, moving stilly back to the still land. The melons stay on the tables of Athenian ladies, speaking even to their high-heeled guests of the potent, authentic earth.

A third kind of Athenian market is the meat-market, where cows (relatively few), sheep, rabbits, and God knows what else drains, hung openly from hooks through the feet. Flies move thickly over the flesh, while private butchers negotiate with the market's management for the best cuts. Cats prowl in the corners of the sheds, making occasional forays toward or through the pools of blood, while the hanging animals, head down, stare at the world out of empty, moodless eye sockets.

Such markets are no place for the sentimentalist. Greeks have no society for the prevention of cruelty to animals. Yet there is some consolation, even for the soft-hearted, in these scenes, once he can reconcile himself to the general fact of man's animal nature and of his need to destroy in order that he may live. It is the consolation of encountering this destruction in an open, unpretentious form, in which the slaughter of the innocents does not dress itself in seductive clothing. In which the fundamental life-giving and death-giving transaction of man with nature is clear.

Even in the Athenian meat-market, in short, Dionysus lives. For in that, as in other open markets of the city, the deep closeness of life-enhancing nature to humanity is present. These markets are so many life lines by which the only partially urbanized Athenian can

reach back toward the natural cosmos which is the source of his power.

Of the many returns to nature which are humanly possible, none is more vivifying than the return to the sea. Bathing is only a mild taste of this immersion, this natural baptism. When we bathe we govern the pond of water into which we lower our flesh. But the sea governs us, tempting us with its power which is so vastly greater than ours and which yet permits us to use it gracefully, in a temporary self-aggrandizement.

Every large city should have a sea near it as a reminder of one of the four elemental forces of our world. Athens has the Aegean at its doorstep, that is, beside the Piraeus. Piraeus itself is not simply an annex of Athens, or a mere port. Rather, it is an independent and rapidly growing commercial city. Yet from Athens, Piraeus seems a suburb, a dependency: the eyes reinforce this impression as they see the long active port spread at the foot of the Attic plain, "down under" hill-crowned Athens.

The Athenians travel down the plain to that sea often, and in large numbers. (They also go east, to the other coast of Attica, where simple fishing villages like Porto Rafina entice connoisseurs.) The west coast of Attica is lined with beaches, stretching from Piraeus all the way to Sunium. Those around Piraeus—which are of interest here—are the least pristine, the most commercialized. Some have had fences cast around them and have been turned into municipal beaches. It is to these that the mass of Athenian swimmers goes: the busses stop obligingly, and by arrangement, at the municipal beaches, while only automobile owners can travel easily down the coast to farther, Edenic beach-spots: to Varkisa and Vouliagmene.

It has been my observation that the Athenians go to the beach to find themselves in nature again, ultimately to worship in that experience which is Dionysus. Yet it must be said, from the start, that the Athenian does not enter the water as though it were his native element. The spirit of vigorous, manly combat with the waves, with the oceanic spirit, is seldom to be seen on these coasts. That is reserved for the Nordic swimmer, or the Oriental. Rather, the Greek returns to the summer sea warily, like a member of the Polar Bear Club plunging into Lake Michigan in January. In this wariness,

probably, the Greek of today shows his kinship with the Greek mariners of antiquity who, though skilled on, and used to, the water, always sailed close to shore through fear of an entire horizon full of sea. That was too much. That was ocean.

Near the sea the Athenian talks more than usually, laughs a great deal, takes off most of his clothes. It is, after all, chiefly in the somber north or in New England that the sea inspires gloomy meditation or a deeper sense of man's finitude. The Aegean itself is a finite sea: tideless, translucent, strictly defined by its coasts. Furthermore, it is beautiful, with an exciting repertoire of colors which centers about turquoise as its norm, wavering frequently toward its opposed extremes of black or pale blue. The Athenian becomes inwardly illuminated in the presence of all this.

The removal of clothes is one sign of his joy. Civilization, itself a pretense, though in the service of the highest tradition in humanity, makes a fetish, as well as a convenience, of clothing. In the great civilized centers of the world, adequate bodily clothing is required. Modesty of this sort is essential in London, Caracas, and Tokyo: it is an integral part of the civilized endeavor and has its roots, probably, in the collective wish to conceal and control the organs of reproduction, those unruly and undiscriminating means to mere existence. But by the sea, out of the immediate magnetic field of society, close to the intensely present force of external nature, the urge to exist in nature's way is strong. Undressing then seems a way of uncovering the true self. (Although the psychiatrist will quickly acquaint us with other motives mixed into that act: the "indecent" component. Yet certainly "nature" should not be blamed for this component, which has tainted us only through our long hibernation in a too proper society.)

The Greek goes down to the sea in few clothes, as few as the posted sign permits, which reads, "Swimming in underpants prohibited." He is likely to purchase his lunch at the beach pavillion—an omelette, salad, some retsina—and to take it back with him to the sand for consumption. There small groups form: a family, lovers, students of the same sex. High-mooded, gay conversation moves out over the sea. A lither form of social existence ensues.

Greeks are not good swimmers, on the whole, particularly the city-dwellers. I mean here something different from their wariness

about the water: I mean their heaviness *in* the water. As a people, the Greeks—those of today, that is—are unathletic. (Can a man with a moustache be athletic?) They seem to swim by preference on their backs, or surrounded by jocular rubber horses. Families paddle about together. People of all ages smile and squeal: a bourgeois re-immersion in the essential.

Occasionally a luminous moment happens, in which the meaning of this large-scale trek to the municipal beaches is evident. I must resort to the first-person singular to explain this. In a moment of wonderful indolence, I was lying stretched out, reading *Vanity Fair,* on the Phaleron beach. I swim very badly and was tired from the little I had done. A girl was lying alone, in the middle of the beach. There were perhaps ten other people around, most of them middle-aged, talking, resting. The sun was low and the sky perfectly clear, signed with that kind of finality which often marks the end of a Mediterranean day. Out of the shower house behind me came three young men in their bathing suits, walking toward the restaurant. When they came to the girl, who was lying flat on her stomach, apparently resting, they stopped and looked. I looked at her too, then, seeing how unusual she was. She had dark-olive flesh and black hair which hung rather droopingly over her shoulders. Her back was toward me: it was firm, delicately trenched around its backbone. Her legs were thin and long. There was a kind of glisten to her whole body from a half-dried film of water, seen now in the luminous, lowering air.

As I watched, one of the men leaned over and touched her damp hair, then put his hand on her neck. It was bare—she was wearing a short two-piece bathing suit. She shook the hand away with a sudden motion of her raising head. It was not quite clear how the gentle touch was meant, or how she interpreted it. There was something almost ritualistic in the movements. The man squatted and stroked her again, this time touching her low on the back. This time there was no doubt. The other two men muttered something low and smiled at each other. One of them touched her foot with his foot. By this time she was sitting up straight: she had a neat, hard body; her black eyes were outraged as she looked at the men. It was no prudish look—she seemed an experienced girl, somehow. Rather, she appeared to say that she found this behavior salacious

and base. The men had expected her to like it, but when she faced them they stepped back. Even they reserved themselves before her. The fact that, in standing straight before them, she showed them a beautiful, young body even less covered than they had supposed at first, showing her hip bones and her long tan thighs, was no incentive to their desire. She made them transcend themselves.

In that instant, she turned and raced into the sea, as lightly and rapidly as music. The men stood watching—as did the others on the beach—as she threw herself into the now gray-blue, totally placid water and swam fast out into it. She moved swiftly, cleaving the water with the least possible disturbance. We could see her head go up and down and her legs move organically; we felt her stillness, isolation, and wholeness in that sea. I think she assumed, in that instant, a kind of symbolic force for the group on the beach. Even the men seemed to know it. Her motion carried all of our senses of return deeply in its wake and left the incident of the hands to oblivion. She was with the true Dionysus now.

One of the fundamental forms of "sympathy" is group infection, in which an emotion communicates itself electrically among the members of a group. Common hate, common desire, common fear —any of these may be contents of this spreading mood. It is not easy to check, and, as we know, it may be dangerously uncontrollable. There is a semi-physical infection which is comparable to this psychic one. I am not thinking of disease, which generally strikes its victim in his passivity, "unselving" him, so to speak. I mean, here, the mere excited awareness of one's physical continuity with other bodies. This may or may not be a sexual awareness. Frequently, I believe, it is not. On Athenian busses it probably is.

The typical Athenian bus is an ancient import from America, creaky in the gears, half-painted, noisy above the usual noises of the city's traffic. It has two managers: a driver and a ticket-seller who moves painstakingly through the crowd. These two men are always in communion—frequently mystic—with one another, although they are often separated by a moving wall of passengers. The driver never leaves a stop before he has received some signal from his mate. Sometimes a bell gives the signal, sometimes not. Perhaps the men

communicate at times like certain insects, with sounds inaudible to human ears.

Between driver and conductor may stand fifty or sixty passengers. Such an overcrowded bus is, alas, a familiar phenomenon in all cities of the world. It is one aspect of the increasingly acute traffic problem which threatens to suffocate cities. But the situation in Greece—or, rather, in the Mediterranean—is special. There the overcrowding of busses arises from more than simply the necessity for a great many people to travel simultaneously in the same direction. These people enjoy, up to a certain point, and varying with the case, their crowded rides. They enjoy a sense of bodily continuity with their fellows.

One knows this from the faces, the ways of talking, and from less conspicuous signs. One knows it from a certain *Gestalt* of feeling which pervades most of these urban busses. It is a feeling of happy physical oneness: is this sexual? In large part it is. Yet we need not fear debasement from sex. Many highly spiritual ceremonies have grown from just this kind of sense of oneness: the *orgai* (orgies) of early Greece are an instance. Spirituality often grows from sexuality. We needn't fear debasement from sex. Doubtless a diffuse sexual infection is strong on Athenian busses.

And yet such infection is not the only aspect of bodily communion on such vehicles. There is a great sense of camaraderie, in shouting back and forth, in random political conversation, in joking with the conductor. Snatches of music are heard: a boy sings. The driver careens through the twilight, turning to talk to a man behind him or crossing himself as he passes a church. Before him are flowers set in a thin vase, and an icon. The bus is strangely home-like, in its unique terms.

The desire for togetherness takes unexpected forms. In one easy-to-parody American incarnation, togetherness becomes a saccharine closeness among the members of a family. In Communist Russia the spirit of togetherness takes—reputedly—the form of a sense of social oneness, of disinclination to privacy. In Mediterranean countries, togetherness often has a public direction, as in the *ideal* Communist state. But in Greece this public direction usually has no political or "organizational" ingredient. In politics, every Greek is

private, infinitely individual. Mediterranean togetherness springs from a sense of the oneness of human beings, bodily or spiritual, sexual or religious.

Group intuition of this oneness is, perhaps, a way of thinking back through the blood to stages of less biological differentiation among human beings, when we all resembled more closely our mutual ancestors. Under the new uniformities which society proposes, and the new individualities which we adopt in order to distinguish ourselves, there remains the old uniformity of the first days of the human adventure. Dionysus is there when we come through our feelings onto that uniformity. Hence the deep emotion associated with membership in a crowd. Hence the strange universality of a ride in a crowded Athenian bus.

The Athenian Acropolis is sanctified chiefly by the abiding presence of Athena, the virgin goddess, sprung from Zeus' forehead, and patroness of wisdom. It is no secret that Athena usually wages tacit warfare with Dionysus: she stands for all he overthrows. Her devotees—such as Pentheus in Euripides' *Bacchae*—have given their lives to her cause, the cause of rational order. Creon himself, in *Antigone,* is one of her faithful. Others there are, even gods, who are unable to understand her adequately. Apollo, in Aeschylus' *Oresteia,* has sanctioned Orestes' slaying of his mother, but Athena, true to her nature, countermands the divine intervention on behalf of vendetta-killing. She saves Orestes, but only on condition that he be part of a new order of justice. That trilogy ends with the victory of Athena over Apollo, and with the consequent foundation of a law court (the Areopagus) in Athens. Rationality, as the principle of civilization, triumphs.

The closeness of ancient Athens to Athena, its patron goddess, is of inestimable significance. The whole bond between civilization and reason or order is implied in this closeness. Yet historians of Greek religion have qualifications to write into the notion that Athena was the dominant goddess of the Athenians. Especially since the study of folklore and nature-myth has become prominent, there has been mounting interest in the complex structure of ancient religious experience. Jane Harrison, in her now outdated though still exciting *Themis*, examined the nature-cults and hero-cults of Greece, bringing startling much evidence to prove the importance of

non-Olympic deities in ancient Greece. Recently a similar, strong argument has appeared in two good books (both available in paperback editions), *The Greeks and the Irrational*, by E. R. Dodds, and *The Greeks and Their Gods*, by W. K. C. Guthrie. Among these usually less-than-respectable cults which co-existed with the Olympic pantheon, and frequently flourished most verdantly in the popular mind, those of Orpheus and Pythagoras were typical. Most powerful of all was the cult of Dionysus.

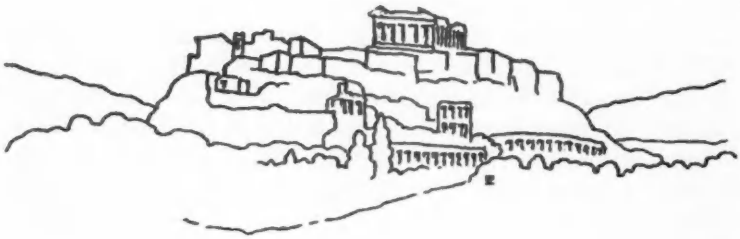
I have said, already, that Dionysus was a complex god of passion, frivolity, and simple intoxication. These are the moods in which Dionysus appeared, took on existence. To the ancient Greeks, as I understand it, the existence of a god was the experience of him. The passionate mood in which Dionysus appeared was a directional experience: it pointed toward procreation, the making of new vitality through one's own vitality. Athena, on the other hand, lived in those experiences which rendered the clarity, definite-ness, and intelligibility of reality. Just as she herself was born from a forehead, pure intelligence without mother, so she is reborn in essentially virgin experience, the experience of form and reason. Form and reason are, in the roughest sense, ungenerative, static. They share the quietude of Plato's "forms" or "ideas" of things.

Dionysus and Athena complement one another, and between themselves exhaust the possibilities of our experience as it can be considered under the aspects of reason and passion. All of this can well be said as a cautioning prelude to an encounter with the Acropolis. For that great mesa of praise to Athena—the Parthenon being the virgin's own and the Nike temple a precious gift to her—invites a superficial approach. All is so brilliantly gleaming there. The marble seems released out of its inner solitude into outer ecstasy by the all-eliciting sun. The world of things spreads around, mainly the city and the hills, in all its surface excitement. On the Acropolis itself this brilliance is offered under the control of a—paradoxically—almost dizzying balance. The Parthenon's famous symmetry seems to seize the eye with all the contentless persuasion of a perfect geometrical proof. In short, form and surface seem united to offer a mathematical demonstration of the beauty of the Acropolis. All this is Athena's work, work which remains superficial unless experienced with Dionysus' help.

This danger is great because, no matter what spiritual equipment

one brings to the Acropolis, he will find it hard to encounter Dionysus there during the day. In the sea or on a bus it is easier, but in the blaze of sun, at the top of the city, Dionysus is reticent. He prefers night and the dark spirits running through the sinuous vine-root. But he is also on the Acropolis from dawn to sunset, staying there in harmony, almost in twinship, with Athena. His voice is lower than hers there, but only the meeting of their two voices composes the richest tone of the place. For the substantive passion in our experience of the Acropolis is Dionysus. He is that inner ecstasy which is lured by the sun into outer ecstasy. The control he longs for, and suffers under, is outer ecstasy, form and reason, Athena. He is the persuasion of deep, substantive feeling, she of mathematics.

Seldom is Dionysus, in fact, so fortunate as to find an adequate mating with the virgin goddess, a mating which permits the virgin to retain her virginity. Seldom is his procreative power so adequately received and contained as by the queen of the Acropolis. Seldom, in fact, is that Dionysus whom the Athenians so persistently, and often unknowingly, worship, as significant or beautiful as he is on the Acropolis. In the taverna, the mind of the language-maker, the sea, the bus, Dionysus comes fleetingly and transportingly, as violent as wine. On the Acropolis he sings in form.



The Dread

By JACK ANDERSON

The street brightens and fades / brightens and fades.
A horse races through me.
He pulls a hundred carriages behind him.
The wheels spin in the ditches.

The street brightens and fades / brightens and fades.
Pages fall from calendars.
They knot themselves between my teeth.
Sand runs from the faucets.

A horse races through a wall inside me.
His legs flutter like paper.
He drinks only the foam on his lips.
He pulls a hundred sealed carriages behind him.

The street brightens and fades / brightens and fades.
And numbers taste like blood in my mouth.

JACK ANDERSON is assistant drama editor of the Oakland (California) *Tribune* and the author of poems in several of the "little" magazines and quarterlies.

The Thaw

By JACK MATTHEWS

Icicles, which grow silently in the night,
crash glassily in the afternoon. I hear
them melting; hear the cracking
as they unfinger the eaves and, heavy as jugs,
plummet to the shining walks.
Sunlight is hot as summertime; it pries
the night-grip loose. Icy water
flashes beneath the hollow filigrees
of crusted snow, all canopied
on blades of grass. Through the footsteps
of swiftly stepping girls,
I see it trickling.

Poet in the Current Fashion

Having learned the language of
"the worm's tooth" and "the heart's stone"
and knowing all about the "lisp of love"
and speaking starkly of the "soul's bone,"
his sound conforms to the most original meter,
and he shocks, predictably, at every end.
No one can say that he's a cheater,
for his rhymes are smart—his images blend.
We all start nodding when he starts an ode;
it's obvious this cat has cracked the code.

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Perkins and the Elect

By CHARD POWERS SMITH

■ It is good news that a biography of Maxwell Perkins, chief editor of Scribner's in the twenties and thirties, is in contemplation. But the project is also a reminder that too little portraiture of the now legendary figure is available for the biographer's selection. There have been profiles and sketches. There is Thomas Wolfe's engaging caricature of Foxhall Edwards in *You Can't Go Home Again*. But all these together provide little more than an endearing outline of this silent, unsmiling, hay-colored figure who enjoyed mutual devotion with such jointly incompatible figures as Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Wolfe, Lardner, and Freeman—to mention the more obvious extremes. The descriptions use the words "patrician," "granite," "Yankee," high Boston and Vermont background and Harvard, though he was raised mostly in New York. Wolfe makes effective use of the "sea-gray" eyes peering ahead from the quarterdeck in the China Sea. All true enough in the outline. Yet the whole portrait is not painted in. Every sketch ends with express or implicit surrender before his "mystery," his "secret," that gave his authors that unique certitude, the sense of being in the hands of ultimate justice, of things as they were and as they ought to be. I think that for the explanation of this "mystery" we must look back to more of his total background than is commonly understood.

But before looking directly at the portrait, it is well to remember the frame around it. This was a period of personal publishing now gone—at least among the great commercial houses—in which two of Max's important virtues were also those of the other distinguished editors of the day. In their selections they were interested primarily

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A good bit of CHARD POWERS SMITH's literary life is detailed in this article. Best known as a historical novelist, he has also published verse and literary studies. His most recent book was *Yankees and God*.

in literary excellence, and only secondarily and grudgingly in sales. The great houses, then as now, were supported chiefly by textbooks, mysteries, travel books, and other departmentalized items, and it was assumed that books of pure literature, which were the concern of the head editors, did well if they paid their costs. The other feature of personal publishing in the twenties and thirties was the independence of the head editors. Max Perkins might leave you wondering for five minutes while he went and discussed your project with an editorial colleague. But the final decision was his. If it was favorable, he gave you your advance then and there. When you were talking with him you were talking with the firm.

All this was in contrast to the methods of impersonal or statistical publication today. In selection, the primary consideration is economic, combining a precise calculation of the cost of making the book, the price it must therefore carry to pay its cost, its share of overhead and a profit, and an expert estimate by the sales department—sometimes involving reference of the proposed book's outline, and even some copy, to the trade—of how many can be sold at that price. And on the score of responsible decision, when you are talking to an editor today, even the chief editor, you are talking to a member of a committee. No matter what his predilection, he is no longer a person, an individual, with the right and the duty of responsible leadership. Authority is in the numerical, purchasing public, irresponsible and unled except by the advertisers. The final decision will be by a meeting which the sales department's attitude will dominate, as in a meeting of the directors of any other business corporation. The publishers attribute this state of affairs to the wickedness of the printers' union, the cost of paper, advertising, and other items. However that may be, the fact is that from about 1640 to about 1940 little American presses, like a few little presses still, published what they considered the best that was offered them, whereas today the richest publishers in the history of the world budget a few losing ventures to which they attach the Hollywood label "prestige," not because of the excellence of the books, but because it is estimated that they will help the overall economy. In relation to Max Perkins, it is important to bear in mind that this tremendous change from personal to impersonal publishing was completed during his last years, which were the war years.

Again, before trying to look directly at the "mystery" or "secret" of Max, it may be well to recall some of the familiar outline. My eighteen years' experience with Scribner's—seventeen of it with Max—began in nineteen thirty, when I had had four books of verse well published and well noticed, but not yet a book of prose. I had for sale a heavy manuscript which rejoiced in the catchy title *Pattern and Variation in Poetry*, and which had been handed back to me by an agent with the comment, "Mr. Smith, no one has a right to produce a manuscript as long as this." It had been rejected by two or three publishers, and on this and other scores it was a critical time for me. One evening predestination put me at dinner beside a charming Mrs. Perkins who, it turned out, had herself published a little and was at the moment having trouble publishing more. In mutual despair, we fell into each other's wine glasses, and she urged me to go see her husband at Scribner's. Max was then unknown to me, for he always professed a slightly top-lofty ignorance of poetry and was never seen in its then swarming bazaar. In my time he left all that to his editorial colleage, the poet John Hall Wheelock.

So the next morning, with all my self-conscious defenses bristling, I got Max's secretary, Irma Wyckoff, on the phone and asked if it would be possible for Mr. Perkins to see me during the next few weeks. "Could you come up now?" asked Irma. She ought to have a big corner in Max's ultimate portrait—I don't know which of them should get more of the credit for the fact that Max always had time.

I can't remember the beginning of that first meeting with Max, but it must have followed the pattern. He would have come out of his corner office on Fifth Avenue on the fifth floor, and would have made his way toward the reception space, clasping his lapels and probably not wearing the old gray hat he sometimes forgot to take off in his office, smirking at the staff people right and left, looking everywhere but at me. He would have stood helplessly at the railed entrance to the reception space, not seeing anybody, till I made my guess and walked up to him, when he would have shaken my hand indifferently, said nothing, turned and started back for his office, assuming that I would follow. When we were well away, he would have stopped suddenly and turned on me as if it had just occurred to him that someone was there, and what business did he have here

anyway? Swift as a thought his gray eyes would hit me appraisingly, censoriously, out of his plain stare—"plain" rather than blank, for "blank" implies emptiness, while his stare was looking for truth, plain truth, the plain truth of the Puritans unadorned by the papish rhetoric of the Church of England. The frightening look would last perhaps a second; then he would give a genial sniff as if we had a private joke together, and his mouth would twitch into a little smile that carried enormous reassurance. Having decided that I did have some business there, he would now hand me ahead towards his office, clasp his lapels again, and follow. As I passed Irma by the office door, she would look up with her smile at once casual and motherly, wishing me well.

After this pattern beginning, I remember that first interview pretty well. I don't know that I have much to add to the descriptions of Max's typical Yankee exterior: the middle-sized man on the lean or stringy side, light-boned, wiry, long-necked and Adam's-appled; well tailored in gray; the hair hay-color drying towards gray on the sides; the complexion weathered smooth like a piece of old barn siding; the nose strong and severe in lines but delicate in texture, like skin stretched over china, obviously a mark of breeding; the gentle speech, equally high New York and high Boston; the hands and gestures with a feminine sensitivity but without effeminacy; the expression—in this first interview—mostly the plain stare looking away from me, garnished occasionally by the flash of appraisal and often by an easy smile which was not typical and was simply his social manner with a stranger; altogether a semi-rustic fusion of toughness and great gentleness such as only New England could produce out of ten or a dozen generations, a figure that would be easy in bared suspenders with a pitchfork on top of a hayload, and just as easy in a cutaway with a silk hat and a gold-headed cane.

Almost entirely Max listened to me that morning. I boasted, of course, about my masterpiece in aesthetics, but more eloquently I indulged in the one kind of personal conversation he liked. With earnest naïveté I confessed my doubt whether, in becoming a poet, I had followed my proper calling, the obligation to serve society imposed on me by tradition, by my father and grandfathers, by my good education and the small competence I would inherit. This was straight Yankee talk, right out of a sense of New England history.

Very soon I knew Max was with me, though I had no inkling of the real reason for this dawn of congeniality. Without realizing it, I was already enjoying something of that settled feeling of the Perkins author of being in the hands of a just God. My book was secondary. Whether it was taken or not, everything was as it ought to be.

Actually, I had decided to do over some of my manuscript, and had nothing to leave with Max but a preface and an outline. He said he'd let me know in a day or two, stood up to dismiss me, and shook my hand warmly—an occasional and significant gesture with him. After I left him I looked back, and he was already reading my preface, sitting straight up with the manuscript on the little reading-stand on his desk, absorbed as if this were the only matter of importance on his horizon. Irma Wyckoff followed my departure with her paradoxical smile, at once affectionate and detached, Irma who remembered for years back everything Max had said or written and who knew his decisions at least as soon as he did. The next morning he called me and asked if $300 would be enough advance—the first prose book I ever published, the first advance I ever had! Years later he told me what he saw in me that morning, and it had very little to do with *Pattern and Variation in Poetry*.

The immediate results of Max's bet on me were not impressive. Scribner's made the mistake of putting my high-brow book on the general instead of the educational list. The first edition sold out slowly, and since it was large enough to clear them, they did not reprint. Meanwhile, the distressing thing for me was Max's ignorance of and indifference to the book's reviews and sales. His only interest in me was in my next job. He more than tripled my first advance and, working through Jack Wheelock, channelled me into a book, not about poetry, but about poets, people. Thereafter the advances on my third, fourth, and fifth books were large and had respectively no relation to my latest sales. Although I think I made money for Scribner's on the whole, I always wince when I hear contemporary wiseacres say that they are still paying for Perkins' extravagances.

Max's principal time and place for doing business with his authors was at long lunches at his reserved table in the front corner of Cheeri-O's restaurant on Fifty-third Street. Always the proprietor, whom Max called "Cheeri-O," rushed forward to seat him and his

guest and take the latter's order for a drink. Always Max would give his guest the plain stare and ask, "Martini?" The guest would ask for something different if he dared, and little Cheeri-O would be instantaneous with the orders. Usually there was a second while the lunch was coming, and sometimes, in emergency, more through the meal. Max was the only publisher I ever had with whom I always paid my share. Nevertheless, I am skeptical of a report that he boasted that he never bought lunch for an author. He always made a hypocritical gesture toward paying, picking up the check, putting it back on the table face up, taking out his wallet and giving me a tentative version of the plain stare till I likewise put my hand in my pocket. Yet I am sure that if I had sat firmly on my slave's right to be alimented, he would have obliged. Also, though he was not above telling little jokes about his authors with affectionate relish—as he also did about his "women"—this matter of petty finance in relation to sometimes needy people was hardly one to intrigue him.

Generally, the communication through the first drink, and often for long minutes after, was silence and a good deal of telepathy flashing off those glances of Max's gray eyes. I usually knew before anything was said whether he approved or disapproved whatever I had proposed in my last letter, perhaps an idea for a new book, or a basic change in the plan of a book in process. Max would break the silence and his stare by speaking directly to the question. If it involved something not yet in process, he would usually propose emendations of my idea, and, now that he knew me, his manner would be argumentative, sometimes pleading, with quick gestures and eyebrows lifted high for emphasis. If the matter were important, like a new book I wanted to start, and we didn't agree after the second drink, we had a third. If we didn't agree then, we had a fourth. And if we didn't agree then, we had another lunch. When we reached agreement, we walked back to the office and Max gave me a check. I recall that on the occasion of the first, and perhaps the second, of these checks, he disappeared and came back with Arthur or Charlie Scribner's signature on my bread and butter. But for at least our last three books, Max sat down at his desk, wrote and signed the check himself as vice-president of the firm.

Of course, much more than business was discussed at those lunches. Sometimes Max would be upset about something, and if

you didn't divert the conversation it would usually come out: somebody's unethical behavior, rarely an author, usually another publisher, sometimes somebody nameless in the office. His gray eyes would enlarge, his brows would lift in moral indignation, and he would glare at you as if you were the culprit, then relent in the flickering smile. Within limits, he would talk pretty confidentially about his own affairs, but he never would tolerate my impulses to confess something intimate or to ask personal advice not in line of professional duty. He would look away in embarrassment and fuss with his hearing aid, and when I paused he would interrupt me.

After Tom Wolfe quit him and went to Harper's in 1937, Max told me stories about him which he hadn't told before: how Tom would call him up any time of the night—perhaps at the office, where Max liked to work in the quiet of the evening, perhaps at his Turtle Bay house, sometimes all the way out at New Canaan—and implore him to meet him somewhere. And gentle Max would follow him around all night while Tom got murderous and suicidal drunk. A rough way of remembering Tom's size is that he would precisely fill a normal, inside house door, both vertically and horizontally, and that he looked pale but not fat. Tom's trouble, of course, was that life was so excruciatingly intolerable that there was nothing you could do but get drunk and pass out about it. Max told me a story of being in a small restaurant with Tom, who was behaving himself, sitting quietly with his drink at a table near the bar. Suddenly the horror of life so overcame him that he stood up, stepped to the bar, picked up the cash register and threw it out into the room.

Max always spoke with quiet conviction, and no sign of resentment or hurt, about Tom's defection. He was persuaded that the point was simply that Tom in his autobiographical writing had reached the point where he came to Scribner's, that everybody in the office was taken apart in *You Can't Go Home Again*, and Tom didn't have the nerve to hand in his copy to his victims. The irony was that, as Tom's literary executor, it fell to Max to cut and prepare the manuscript, wherefrom he deleted all the Scribner characters except himself. I presume the hurt was deep, and that when the hurt was deep Max showed it with his easy manner and his social smile.

No matter how familiar you got with Max, his expression of

approval of something you proposed rarely got more exuberant than the little private smile, alternating with the appraising glare, and perhaps a shift of position in his chair, showing emotion. But his disapproval of suggestions became more demonstrative with familiarity. I can remember four grades of it. First, if the matter was slight, there was a simple, good-natured scowl, perhaps with little shakes of the head, all no more than a social mannerism related to small talk. Second, if the matter really got into his attention, there was the censorious or appraising version of the gray-eyed plain stare, but alleviated by the little smile as if to say he knew you were too intelligent to be serious about anything so silly. Third, there was the censorious stare unrelieved by the smile, very stately and terrible. And fourth, if you proposed something intolerable that could not be ignored, the stare was reinforced along the fine nose by the lift of a scornful nostril in olfactory discomfort, to which might be added a nauseous smile that was trying unsuccessfully to be forebearing. It was an expression of horrified compassion that you, his friend, his author—and therefore a very great author!—should have fallen into this dreadful delusion. The expression would last a few seconds, which was a sufficient eternity, then it would resolve into a scowl and scatter in small negative head-shakes. But those seconds were plenty. Not only did the passage persuade me that my notion had been imbecilic, but it threw me in my turn into compassion for him, poor Max, poor very God, that I in my childish blindness should have imposed on him such suffering.

I can remember three instances of that absolute quashing of my proposals. Once when I asked him to do my epic poem—the refusal here was, of course, second hand from Jack Wheelock. Once when, at the height of the best selling of *Artillery of Time*, I came into the office and asked him what the sales were. Of course he had no idea, and after dissolving me with that look of sickening astonishment at my avarice, he took up the receiver and called the fourth floor. And the most dramatic instance had been a year earlier, and, through my perfidy at a popular bar, had got into the *New Yorker* and other public prints. That was in the fall of 1938, when my big Civil War novel was approaching final draft, and one day at Cheeri-O's I proposed for title what I said was the only good phrase in the "Battle Hymn" that hadn't been used, namely "The Grapes of Wrath." Max

gave me the apocalyptic look and said, "Not a good selling title." Steinbeck's book was announced the next spring. Later, I brutally mentioned the matter to Max. He gave me a peculiarly delicate, fragile form of the plain stare. It was saying, "Please."

Max's devastating manner of negation was in contrast to the orthodox author-soothing that usually accompanies rejections. Max's unconditioned denial acted as a purge. You were utterly emptied of your idea, even if it had been a good one. There remained no hurt, no resentful memory. The author-soothing method is different, and every big publisher has at least one editor who is adept at it. It rejects your proposal with lacrimose regret, with minute and convincing explanations how, in spite of the fact that the book you propose would obviously be the greatest of its kind in human history, yet so pathetically precarious is the state of the publisher's list that at this particular moment it is out of the question. Actually, the paragon of author-soothers in my experience has been Jack Wheelock, good poet and Max's editorial colleague. I don't know how many times in eighteen years Jack rejected my proposal for some kind of an edition of my verse. But he always left me with the conviction that after all he and I knew that I was the greatest poet of all time. And so expert was Jack's method that his rejections would keep my *amour propre*, my ego, in good and inflated order for a long spell. Even at this moment, there is a residuum of fatuousness that wonders whether he really thought as badly of my verse as his consistent rejection implied. All the same, Max's method, with but one swift needle-prick of pain, was cleaner, and the inoculation was permanent. Even his mistake about "The Grapes of Wrath" still seems to me no mistake, and I couldn't imagine my book under any other title than that of Lincoln's "artillery of time."

Although I was always fond of Jack Wheelock, and he helped me with *Annals of the Poets* and at least one of my novels, yet it always seemed to fall to him to present to me the negative attitudes of the firm toward my affairs. And so he is identified in my memory with the final collapse of the world of personal publishing which is the necessary frame around any portrait of Max Perkins. Max died in 1947, and Jack inherited his editorial seniority and his office. During the preceding few years, the new method of impersonal or business-machine publishing, the selection of books by a committee

upon a criterion of statistics, had been adopted by most of the great firms. Like many authors, I was in a state of touchy outrage about it, though I had no reason to think that Scribner's had succumbed. I supposed that Jack and I would thresh out any new proposals I had until we reached agreement, as Max and I had always done. Sometime in 1948, about a year after Max's death, on a day that became a climactic one for me, I came into Jack with the idea that eventually became *Yankees and God*. When I had outlined it, Jack assured me that it would make the greatest historical work that Scribner's had ever been privileged to publish. "Fine," said I. "How much advance can you give me?" "Well, Chard," said Jack, "since you've been in we've adopted a new system. I'll have to ask you for an outline and a little copy, and we'll consider it most sympathetically in a meeting." "Will there be salesmen in the meeting?" I asked. Jack said there probably would. So I walked out of Scribner's after eighteen years and went down to another great publisher whose editor I knew liked my work. He lacked the author-soother's tenderness, but said that in the old days he would have given me an advance right now, but they also had this new rule about putting everything before a meeting. Again I refused to condone the meretricious method, and I went to a small publisher who was foolish enough to want me without mathematical sanction. And so ended, in two of the strongest houses, the world of personal publication in which legend has Max Perkins, probably justly, as the greatest of American editors.

So much for the surface of Max, the external evidence of the inner "mystery" that united so many and so disparate authors to him in extraordinary mutual loyalty. But for the mystery itself, I don't know that anyone has come nearer to it than to mention its attributes "granite," "Yankee," and "patrician." The "granite," of course, was the quality of toughness, stability, and sense of duty that all Yankees have in some degree if they were raised in the New England tradition anywhere between Calais, Maine and Carmel, California. It may be especially hard in the Boston "patrician," which Max essentially was, a member of a strong aristocracy, incapable of either snobbery or unintended affront, an ex-Puritan aristocracy in which the obligation of caste elevates the private calling to the solemnity of a public duty. Its granite qualities could be expected to survive in

Max against all defeat, as indeed they did. But the affirmative, living quality within the solid granite, like a human eye gazing out of a stone watchtower—that was the prerogative of an aristocracy not identified with any dynastic tradition. That was the quality of the Puritan "saint," composite of traits and beliefs which, though no longer integrated around the central religion, yet come down as tendencies, psychological needs, into the inheritance of every Yankee. There were the two essential traits that come with Grace: first, the clear and universal Perception or "Light," the eye unblinded of self so that it saw all things "as they be"; second, the Humility that was only the watching eye divested of the self-concern, the "pride," that considered whether it was indeed among the Elect. And there were the two basic doctrines, Predestination (duly qualified with loopholes for free will), and, a special case of predestination, the Calling of every man assigned to him from the beginning of the world. In every Yankee these four qualities survive, weakened but still essential. The Perception has lost its universality, the watching eye in the granite tower no longer sees the whole Cosmic Drama of man's Creation, Fall, and Redemption; instead it sees a limited panorama peculiar to each individual, but comprehensive enough to satisfy the demands upon life of the individual's imagination. The Humility remains about as it was, most evident in the Yankee's reluctance to "show off." The belief in Predestination becomes simply the sense of things as they are, and of the foolishness of wasting time trying to make them otherwise. And the doctrine of the Calling remains as the presumption that every individual is "cut out" for one way of life rather than any other. In these four qualities we have the support, the skeleton, of every Yankee. And as exceptionally strong, this inner frame accounted for the "secret," the "mystery," of Max Perkins.

It may be that in my first interview with Max I won his interest because my vision of life, my private state of grace, resembled his, though more essential was his immediate perception in me of the quality that for him marked the saints, the Elect. Max's panorama of grace, seen with unalterable conviction, was an island about two hundred years long and a lifetime wide, a span covered by his own observation, from the youth, a century past, of authors who attained final, immortal salvation within his memory, to the final immortalization, a century hence, of his own authors who were now young. It

was an island whose ways were untrodden by finance, fashion, vanity, or expediency, its landscape unblemished by advertising, its silence unviolated by chattering, publishers' parties. Its light was the reality that inheres in a good story, any kind of story, stories as disparate as those of Max's most famous authors. And its inhabitants were the literary elect—all, of course, Scribner authors!—predestined from the beginning of the world to the calling of either fiction or history and to the ultimate salvation of the permanent shelf of literature.

Without considering whether he himself was among the chosen saints on his island, Max knew his own calling was to recognize in them the light of their story-telling genius and so to welcome them into grace. Lacking any visible religion, he was yet a Puritan divine accredited to administer the sacrament to the Elect, to assist them in their worship, and to cherish them generally. So far as I can remember, Max had no general theories or standards of literature. But by flipping the pages of a manuscript rapidly, he could see life or death in each paragraph. And by striking a man a few blows with that gray-eyed stare, he could hear literary life echoing back if it was there to echo. With all the power of predestination behind him, he knew that he could not err in his perceptions and selections. And it was this unalterable certainty of the Puritan in the state of grace, becoming towards each of us an unalterable loyalty, that was his "mystery," his "secret," that held us. Because he never doubted that he was carrying out the will of things as they had to be, we correspondingly felt that with him we were in the hands of God.

Max's saintly humility was evident in his perpetual readiness to minister to his authors in every circumstance, as in his chaperonage of Tom Wolfe in his pilgrimages of despair. It also appeared in his reverent attitude toward their copy. In the million and a half words of my manuscripts that he read, I am sure he never suggested the change of a word, unless an obvious mistake. Instead, he would make shy little right angles in red pencil around the beginnings and the ends of passages, sometimes running to pages, and he would suggest diffidently that if it wouldn't be too much trouble I might consider deleting them. On the rare occasions when I didn't comply with his suggestion, nothing more was said, it was as if he never made it. It is my not quite certain memory that he told me that this

was his method in his famous amputations of Tom Wolfe's excesses—whole pages, whole chapters, whole books!

I have overworked my first conversation with Max for several reasons: partly to show him in his typical practice of accepting not the manuscript but the man; partly to show his swift perception of the man in a few minutes' interview; and partly to show how his perception of the man as one of his elect was actually his perception of his special calling, of the particular kind of books he was predestined to write. During the four years when I was revising my first Scribner book and writing my second—both in the field of poetry—Max and I wasted whole lunches fighting the Civil War, for no reason that occurred to me except that it provided an agreeable diversion. At that time I, at least, was not qualified to discuss any aspect of it, though I did have a good deal of bottled up emotion about it, and Max had some knowledge of some of the battles. And through these naïve conversations we came up to an occasion in 1936 which showed him and his "mystery" more clearly than any other episode I know.

My *Annals of the Poets* had come out in late 1935, and at that time it had not yet earned its advance—though it did in course. In this, to me, dismal state of affairs, we went over to Cheeri-O's, had our first martini, and sat silent as usual. I had no new proposal to make, and I was ashamed and apprehensive, for I thought I'd let him down, and this time I had no complaint of the firm. Without any preamble, speaking in his softest, chariest tone, looking straight before him as if I weren't there, Max said, "I thought you might do a Civil War novel?" And he swung his gray eyes on me with that imperious, appraising look. Only the little smile didn't follow, because I looked down and was speechless in the grip of shyness compounded of two Puritan emotions, the sense of guilt or inadequacy before a vision of perfection, and the sense of being in God's hand. By magic our second martinis were before us. I drank mine and looked down again. I heard Max say, "I saw a historical novelist in you from the beginning." In other words, he had taken on a poet to write a book about poetry, which meant nothing to him, in order to lead him through a book about poets, which meant little more, to a book about people in a historical setting which he knew almost from the moment of meeting him was his calling.

I saw this and it increased my shyness to the verge of a convulsing throat. The spasm passed and I looked up suddenly. Max was staring at me very severely, the eyes beginning to insinuate that I was guilty of some awful perfidy. I said, "Max, why don't you let me go? Why do you want to lose money on me again?" Then came the speech of the great publisher and the great Puritan, out of irresistible predestination. Scowling terribly, he first looked away, while his long neck ostriched up till the Adam's apple was three or four inches above the soft collar. Then he swung that strong, delicate beak at me, curled up a corner of it and looked down at me with amazed horror. "We won't lose money on you," he said. "We're just beginning to make money on people we published in the eighties." Besides the usual contempt for stupidity, there was genuine anger in his expression, stronger than any I had seen in him. I have since wondered whether, even then in 1936, his ordeal might not have been beginning, whether strong forces in Scribner's were not already urging him to drop people like me who were barely paying their keep. His scorn was partly for my cowardice, but his holy anger was for those of his colleagues who didn't know that his authors were of the Elect and inhabited a country where time was not in fiscal years and final salvation was normally a half-century to a century in coming.

And so presently we went back to the office, and he gave me the biggest check yet. And predestination did not fail us, for after three years it produced *Artillery of Time* which Max believed, as he had foreseen from soon after our first meeting, was the definitive novel of the Yankee war, complete with the Perfect Union replacing the Kingdom of God and the industrial revolution with the rapacity of its new rich beginning the final chute of Puritanism.

I don't know exactly when the clouds began to gather across Max's panorama of grace, for I was out of Scribner's between 1943 and 1946. But it is certain that the curtain of circumstance fell across his vision during our years in the war. It is easy to give a practical account of it. Wolfe had deserted him in 1937 and died in 1938, leaving Max the lugubrious duty of editing for Harper's *You Can't Go Home Again*. In 1940 Fitzgerald died. In the same year appeared *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and it turned out to be the last column in

the colonade of great successes, stretching from the early twenties, by the famous triumvirate on whose discovery Max's fame chiefly rested. *The Yearling* had appeared in 1938, and I don't think Mrs. Rawlings repeated its success. My third novel (1943), a war effort crediting American advertising with the inspiration of Hitler's popular methods, was a flop. The list of diminishing figures could be extended. It was whispered that Perkins was losing his grip.

And so he was, but not for these reasons of elementary arithmetic. As long as Max had a congregation of authors of his own selection, he perceived and believed in their immortality, and as long as he had that vision the failure of a book or two or three was of no more importance to him than were an original, elected Puritan's pecadillos of alcohol or fornication to his co-saints. Nor is there any reason to attribute his decline to any failure of his own inner sight, his watching eye that saw a world. Rather, we must look for some curtain thrown over his vision from outside, so he would be prevented from seeing his island of grace, with its two-hundred-year length, its heavenly exercise of personal publishing, and its Elect strolling back and forth narrating the glory of God.

The landscape in which blindness was imposed on Max was, of course, that of the war in which the old America died, including New England culture which hadn't changed anything but its styles since 1640. In the teens and twenties, religion as such was long gone, but we still had a pseudo-grace in our idealizations of sex and beauty, and in the thirties were added our pink ideas of the social perfection that would be certain when the glorious revolution had overthrown the wickednesses of capitalism, Mussolini, and Hitler. But the war was fought by the babies of the teens and twenties who had been brought up to scorn the ancient vision of God, eternity, and public service, and who easily saw through their parents' paper balloons of sex and beauty and "social consciousness." The war was to them merely a bloody and muddy mess bequeathed to them by the late rhetorical generations. Their standard in the war was physical comfort, and afterwards they imposed the same standard on the nation, which they shortly became. They never dreamed of any but the simplest, positivistic objectives: economic security, with a few sports to draw off any atavistic vagaries of fancy; cautious hope for enough advancement in the company to buy another car and, at the loftiest,

to have three or four children with healthy teeth and no delusions. It was a mind of an admirable simplicity, embodying the intimation that the human imagination—or spirit—after a half million years of trial had been found wanting and was to be expunged, and mankind would resume its traditional course of evolution, that of an increasingly rational animal increasingly the master of its physical environment.

This was a landscape appropriate to the blinding of Max's imagination. But the actual curtain that would block his perception had to be intimately drawn. I don't know when the I.B.M. method of passing on manuscripts was imposed on Scribner's by the younger element which presently took over the firm, the representatives of the "realistic" war generation. As I have already said, it was there by 1948, a year after Max's death, when it fell to Jack Wheelock, who probably liked it no better than Max did, to apply it to me. But before that, when I came back in 1946 after three years' absence, Max's bearing had already changed. The watching eye, the free vision to choose and minister to the Elect, was blocked off, frustrated, and transformed into a mild neurosis. What I found was only the granite tower, the gentleman from New England.

I came back, eager to finish the dynastic trilogy begun with *Artillery of Time* and continued with *Ladies Day*. I found by my nose that Max was drinking in the office now, even in the morning—though he never offered me any and I don't know where he kept his supply. His mien was a kind of detached solemnity, touched with his social manner, very little of the old, highly animated plain stare, nothing of the old flashes in the sea-gray eyes of high indignation or perception and faith. I felt a stranger with him, and would have assumed that he was easing me out, but there never seemed to be any question about our going on with the original enterprise—perhaps he was still permitted to coddle the former Elect so long as he didn't introduce any new ones. I don't remember how the question of a new advance came up, but I do know that he seemed to assume there would be one, and at the same time acted embarrassed about it. I, of course, was ashamed, because *Turn of the Dial* hadn't earned its advance, and never intended to ask anything but that its arrears be debited against my next book. This proposal so obviously relieved

Max that it left me still uncomfortable with him. Whatever the actual situation was, it was evident that he was no longer free to treat me with the largess due an elected saint who was entitled to the last copper at the bottom of the last coffer in heaven.

The next year, from early 1946 to early 1947, was a kind of Stygian one for me with Max, a kind of dim after-life of two ghosts who had known each other on earth. For some reason he had changed his restaurant, and I didn't lunch with him but two or three times anyway. Once we lunched in Grand Central! I remember that occasion in particular, because we sat silent throughout the meal. I was continuing to fail to repeat my justification to the Elect, for it appeared that I couldn't write contemporary fiction, which the new big novel was trying to be. Some time in the middle of 1946, I brought him about two-thirds of a first draft, and he turned it down, as I expected him to do. Some time early in 1947, I brought him another two-thirds of another first draft, and this he would have accepted, with changes, but this I in my turn withdrew. All of this was, of course, not happy, but I'm sure it disturbed him less than whatever the new taboos were that were descending on him. I am sure that if he had been his old self I would have done a better job for him. For I too was profoundly confused by the new world of materialism, relativity, and expediency in which I also was a puritanical atavism.

Perhaps my abortive novel did contribute something to the ghostly emptiness of our silences, for it was about our generation and would end with precisely the major change in America that we were experiencing. As before, I would leave Max big batches of manuscript and in a few days would come in for his comment. At his desk he would pick up a sheaf of chapters and flip through it for places he had marked. During this process, on three separate occasions through the year, he showed the black curtain that was eclipsing him. And he showed it repetitiously, as out of proto-alcoholism, proto-senility, or both. On each of these three occasions, holding my manuscript in his hand, with the aura of alcohol around us, he turned on me suddenly with something like the old plain stare of perception, and at the instigation of something of mine he had just read said, "Chard, it's a new rhythm. We don't know what it is. And we

never will." The curtain of economic motivation had finally fallen over the watching eye of grace. The Puritan minister was stopped from serving his flock.

There is a school that holds that Max purposely kicked off that oxygen tent in the hospital, and so died. That, to be sure, might have been an appropriate, dramatic gesture. But self-dramatization was something that neither the New England gentleman nor the Puritan would have indulged in, even subconsciously. If he did that, it more likely would have been as a joke on the absent nurse, to show her she didn't know everything, that humility was the first mark of right reason.

I suppose I never attended a funeral where there were more writers than went out to New Canaan for Max's. Also, I'm sure I never attended a funeral where so many worldly people were crying and concealing it badly. Those authors has lost something strong, like a personal god, and they knew it could not be replaced. I also cried, though I had one consolation which has made me write this memoir. I understood the State of Grace, and now the State of Salvation, into which Max, in his secret, sinful moments, had probably hoped to be received: an island whose light was literary excellence; peopled by the Elect; a lifetime wide and two hundred years long; and beyond, the unexplored seas of infinity. I knew that island well, for I had visited it with Max. And I knew he was there.

The Season of Marriages

By B. REUBEN

■ "What's in that box, old man?"

"That's a big box you have there, old man. What's in it for us?"

"Give it here old man. Give it here."

The urchins of his *mohalla* loitering near the tram-stop at the Wadi Bunder junction when they saw him alight from the tram, hugging the big, newspaper-wrapped box carefully to his ragged-coat covered chest.

They pulled at him

one threw a handful of *chana* at him, it hurt sharp like little pellets and showered to the road at his feet

another tugging his coat so hard he heard the rent tear a little more

but walked through them like a blind-deaf man, utterly oblivous.

Where he lived bordered on the dock area of Bombay, the roads lined with ancient, dilapidated tenements and chawls where the poor, millhands, dockyard men, factory workers lived. Every year during the monsoons some of the buildings, decrepit and beyond repair, collapsed, killing residents under the debris of a crumbling neighborhood.

Heavy-duty lorries loaded high with cargo jet recklessly through the streets racing B.E.S.T. buses, clanging trams, bullock-carts, handcarts

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B. REUBEN has been closely associated with the Indian film world for the past decade, first as a reporter and critic for several newspapers, later as a movie publicist, and most recently as a producer and script writer. His stories have appeared in leading Indian periodicals for many years. This is his first appearance in this country, but another story is scheduled in a forthcoming issue of *New World Writing*.

people disgorging from the anonymity of tenements into the anonymity of streets, hurrying to work.

He turned down a very narrow alleyway littered with the refuse dumped from overlooking chawls, and the *charpoys* of the men who slept in the street in the summer months

lolling there now, clad only in multicoloured *loongis* chatting-smoking.

He picked his way through them

the children of his chawl saw him, began chanting-jeering

"Mooch wale chacha! Mooch wale chacha!"

Mustached Uncle! Mustached Uncle!

Skeleton-thin, tattered-ragged, walking on shoes that have lost most of their soles

white-haired, emaciated, the face deep-furrows-eroded

the eyes dull-listless

telling that the man who lived within had long since died, fluttered away like an escaping bird from the twin-eye windows leaving the shutters gaping wide

and the only sign remaining to tell that once this was a man, the bushy, upturned-to-points grey-white moustasche, relic of years-before-yesterday when he had been son of a fine family and best man of the Territorial Forces.

He waded through yelling children, only the furrowed hands tightening on the box he clutched to him revealed awareness of his immediate surroundings.

He turned into the dark stairway of the chawl

nauseous gutter stench

the dark corners beneath the stairway where numberless chawl children excreted because the single latrine common to each floor had no water and filth of months accumulated in them

ragged boys and girls singing-jumping around

a woman squatted on the steps suckling her child, ugly red sores on its face, and it had fallen listlessly away from her breast so it hung swollen nipple glistening wet staring provocatively at him, and the woman laughed

"So even now it's not too late to look!"

coarsely, showing *paan*-stained teeth,

"What's your age, old man? Shall I tell the vulture, old man?"

Detouring her, he began stepping carefully up the stairs

dark it was, foul, he turned on the landing

rows and rows of rooms, in each of them lived six-eight people, ten o'clock now but the chawl passageway dark like night, stale

doors hanging open he could look inside each room-home and they looked at him as he picked his way through the children playing in the corridor,

stepped into his own room

shouting, jarring screeching noise

orchestral accompaniment to disintegration-poverty-age

his old woman was off again

lean-emaciated evil-looking, her dirty torn cotton *saree* flapping about her like vulture wings

"and I had to wait two hours before they even opened the door. Didn't I tell you I won't go there again, eh, you old pariah? Why can't you go there to collect your monthly charity, they're your relations after all, huh, the servant says wait I'll call *baiee* and shuts the door, and there I was waiting like any sweeper-woman to go in and clean their latrines. And after it all the bitch comes to the door and says send the old man there's something we have to talk to him, well what've they to say to you now, eh? Don't tell me they're going to stop the dole, that thirty rupees a month's all I have to keep you from starving to death, I suppose they think they're doing us a favor—"

he crossed his wife's brother's daughter, a young widow who had been living with them with her three children since her husband's death

"you better go and see them she said to send you this evening, can you hear me or not—then why don't you say something, eh? And what's that box you've brought?"

suspiciously

"what's in that, eh? Where'd you get the money for it?"

She was standing near the little walled-off corner of the room where there was a tap and it served as a place to bathe, and the *choola* was near it where they cooked and woodsmoke puffing out of it now from beneath a pot she had put on the fire.

He put the box on the bed

facing him she put her hand behind her, groping behind the

row of pots and utensils on the shelf, in the little biscuit-box hidden behind, maybe the old dog stole this money I've been hiding

no, it was there.

"Now look here," she stepped across the younger woman sprawled listlessly on the floor, her children lying across her

"you let me see that!"

He stood between the woman and his box.

"It's nothing," he said patiently, his voice was low, incredibly gentle, "I, I'm . . . been invited to a wedding this evening and it's a present I'm giving—"

"Wedding!" she shouted. "Present! Why, you, you—do you know the rent-man was in this morning we're to be thrown out end of this month we're a year back in rent and you go buying wedding presents. Who's getting married anyway!"

"Friends of mine," he was dignified, not looking at her. "Their daughter. Rich people you know—"

"I know, I know! The only people you know're rich people and fat all of good it's done us. Now you show me that—"

suddenly lurching she pushed him aside

grabbed the box.

"No!" he tried to scream and his voice broke, tried to grab the box from her. "No give that here—"

but she'd torn off the newspaper wrappings

the box fell open

she stared in it

looked up at him

"What's this! Nothing inside?"

She put her hand in, rummaging came up with an envelope

"Aha! Money, so you're giving away cash presents now!"

She tore open the envelope and a paper fell out.

"What's this?" suspiciously eyeing it. "Something in English—"

turned to the younger woman.

"Here. Didn't you study some English when you went to school? Read this."

She took it, stared uncomprehendingly at the writing, spelt it out laboriously

"EVERY WOMAN SHOULD MARRY—AND NO MAN. WITH BEST WISHES."

He grabbed the paper from her.

"Eh?" the old woman growled. "What's that, eh? Think you're very funny?"

He turned from her
not seeing properly, blinking
put the paper back in the envelope
put the envelope in the box, began wrapping it up again.

"So you'll see her in the evening? We need that money you know."

"I brought thirty rupees from them just fifteen days back," he said dully. "She gave me some old clothes too. What happened—"

"What happened! I sold them of course, d'you think any of them fitted you! And don't you ask me about the money, I know you're thinking I drank it all away, never a moment's peace I get when you're in here. And yes that daughter of yours came in the night asking for you. She's coming again this afternoon and if I catch her asking for money I'll kick her out. Why doesn't her husband work, eh? Will you tell me that? Why doesn't her husband work? You think we got her married so she could go on living off us? What d'you think we're running, a charitable institution?"

She went quickly across to the *choola* and took the boiling pot of rice off the fire, dumped it on the floor.

"How'd the work go last night, eh?"

she looked at him
he had taken off his coat
sat in a corner on the floor trying to repair it with needle-thread.

"Are you deaf?" she shouted. "How'd the work go last night?"

"They don't want me," he mumbled. "They said a nightwatchman's got to be a younger man, so I . . . I. . . ."

"Then where were you last night, eh?"

"I, the man there gave me some hot tea, told me I could sleep inside, he has a nice little corner there and—"

"And I suppose that made you feel like a king. Huh! If you've found a place to sleep why come back here at all? Why? Go back, don't ask me for anything to eat now."

"No," he said quickly. "No. Nothing to eat."

"So I suppose the man fed you too! And tonight he'll clothe you and give you money. What d'you remind him of, his grandfather?"

"I'm not going back tonight," he said patiently. "I told you I was invited to this wedding and—"

"Invited? I saw no invitation card around. When'd it come?"

"You'd been to the bazaar yesterday," he explained patiently.

"Then show me. Show me."

He said nothing, continued to stitch.

"What happened to that coat those people gave me last summer?" he said suddenly. "It was good black cashmere and the holes were under the arms where they'd not show."

"I sold it," she growled.

"Sold! But, but, it fitted, fitted me."

"Oh yes it fitted you" she came stood over him, arms akimbo, "And the bill you ran up when you were sick that time that fitted you too, eh? What about the medicine, who paid for the medicine?"

The younger woman's sick child crying harshly
she lay there, eyes closed, elbow over them,
indifferent
the child's yelling shot up like temperature.

He lay aside the stitching, called the child's name. When he spoke there was an incredible gentleness in his voice like soft comfortable blankets and the child's crying sniffed gradually into silence. Then he got up, crossed to the old man, fell in his lap.

"Tell me a story, old man. You said you know so many stories. Tell me a new story this time."

He shook his head and

"Oh go on! Tell him a story! You want him to yell the chawl down again? Tell him stories about your rich friends, you're so good at that."

In the evening he left the chawl, box under arm, caught a tram to the opposite part of the city.

Mid-May now, sweltering hot
the marriage season, that period which according to astrological calculation was held to be most auspicious for solemnizing weddings
the season was twice a year—April and May, the summer months, and November, December, January, the winter, though winter here was only chill breeze in the night
so wonderful the streets looked

comfortable, bright

all the halls were booked for marriages

gayly decorated

booked from months in advance

somebody told him at a wedding he attended that it'd become profitable to book all the halls in the city for the season, monopolize them, then give them out to people piecemeal, charging heavy rates

impossible to get a hall now, cheap like it used to be in the old days.

He turned down the street.

Multicoloured rows of lighted bulbs etched the archway of the hall

cars stopping, driving away again

people getting out

well-dressed

perfume of the women, expensive *sarees*

giggling, laughter

conversation

he looked the place casually over as he walked to it

seemed to be a Maharashtrian wedding from the people standing at the entrance, receiving guests

not very crowded.

Without hesitation he moved on down the road, walking till he approached the Parsee *agiyari*,

heard the band blaring "he's a jolly good fellow" above the din of traffic.

Straightening his tie and clamping his elbows close to his sides to conceal as much of his times-without-number mended coat, he moved towards the gate

began to smile

corpulent Parsee men at the gate, dressed in white, wearing the elaborate black headgear which they used for formal occasions, receiving guests,

he moved in behind a group of well-dressed men and women arrived just before him.

"Good evening," he murmured, shaking hands. "Congratulations."

went in casually not looking back

registering the smiles he received, those vague-polite wedding-ceremony smiles used to greet guests, you never knew whose friend, relative, or business associate who was.

The *agiyari* was situated in the middle and the enclosed area around it was filled with rows and rows of chairs

everybody sitting, chatting

laughter

he sat down

immediately took a plate of ice-cream off the tray of a waiter hurrying by.

Eating it, gradually conscious of the man sitting besides him, observing him

he turned, their eyes met

he smiled.

"They've done a good job I see," he murmured. "Old Sohrabji must be very proud tonight."

The man smiled politely.

"I see. You're his friend?"

"Aren't we all?" the old man murmured.

He finished the ice-cream, put the plate beneath the chair, got up and moved in the crowd

people going up on the raised dais where the bride and bridegroom sat

congratulating them, handing over the wedding presents, stepping down again

a group of elderly Parsee women directing the visitors after they came down from the dais towards the enclosure at the further end, where rows of tables were arranged for dinner.

He moved slowly with the crowd towards the dais. It took him some time to reach the couple, clustered round with giggling girls, really this must be one of the biggest weddings he'd attended in some years.

He went up the steps

they were looking at him

he smiled, proferred the box

an old man standing behind the couple noting down the gifts as they were handed over, into a little black diary

the bridegroom took the box smiling politely

they shook hands

the box was placed on a table there piled high with gifts.

"Congratulations to the happy couple," he murmured. "Best of luck."

The bride smiled politely at him

he turned, stepped down

they glanced at each other, questioningly

turned again to shake hands with the thronging guests.

He paused casually near the group of elderly chattering women

the fat woman turned smilingly to him

"This way, Uncle, this way! Vegetarians this side, non-vegetarians that side."

"Definitely non-vegetarian," he murmured

you never attended a Parsee wedding to eat a vegetarian dinner

drifted with the crowd to where the tables were.

One batch of guests had just finished eating

they were rapidly cleaning away the plantain-leaves on which dinner was served, arranging fresh leaves for the next batch, and bottles of aerated waters, lemonade, orangeade, vimto, at each place.

He sat down

the thing to do was finish quickly and leave at peak time while people were still coming in

glanced round at the little enclosure at the left from where they'd bring out the food

rich aroma of cooking

obliterating the perfume of women

one meal a day like this and no more of her rice and fried gram.

The waiters came hurrying out bearing steaming platters of food, converged on the rows of tables, went rapidly through, filling the plantain-leaves

fresh, orange-coloured *gelabis*, sweet

chutneys, a pickle

steaming Delhi rice, that ivory-white long-grained rice so expensive

then that very special Parsee dish, chicken *dhansaak*, they served him generous portions

and fish cooked in the way only Parsees could, coated with green chutney, steamed in special leaves served wrapped in the leaves

he began eating

it was very tasty *dhansaak*, rich and spicy, it made his tongue smart, eyes water

when the waiter passed by again he took a second helping.

He finished slowly, washing down the meal with a glass of iced vimto. He looked around casually at the enclosure again, maybe a sweet dish or more ice-cream. People were leaving the table.

He hesitated, about to get up

saw the waiters come out

they served him huge scoops of ice-cream mixed with bits of cashew nut and almonds

he finished, got up, moved back with the others, smiling vaguely all round, murmuring "Good evening" whenever somebody caught his eye, and *"Saiebji"* to the Parsees

they were serving cigarettes

he took one when the man passed by him

lit it

sat down abruptly as he inhaled, puffed out

how long he hadn't smoked, mildly giddy, so exquisite sensation as though floating out of himself

really he must go now.

He went towards the entrance, shook hands with the hosts at the very moment when many people were coming in, murmured "Good night" and hurried away

swallowed in anonymity in crowded night streets.

"Well, aren't you going to call on them?"

The old woman stood over him

"They were expecting you last evening but you had this almighty important wedding to attend, and where did you sleep last night?"

head bent, stitching his frayed trousers

"Well are you deaf or what, or am I always to yell at the walls—"

"Where's your niece?" he asked softly.

"Why why, what's it to you?" angry-defensive now. "She's gone to her dead husband's relatives and don't you—"

"She always takes the children when she goes there," patiently, like explaining to a backward child,

"These people all know about it in the chawl, about how she goes on the top floor and meets that fellow under the staircase there in the afternoons,"

he continued staring at the needle as though addressing it

"and wouldn't it be better if you spoke to her, we're all being laughed at, I know you feel it's the easiest way to get her off your hands but how d'you know he'll marry her? If you're not careful you'll have a pregnant widow on your hands and—"

"Teaching me my business are you, and don't you dare speak like that again you filthy-minded old pariah you, you've got cowdung on your brain, what's left of it—"

he got up, pulled on his trousers

"So you go there now! Go immediately, don't return without that money, the rent man's coming in the evening."

He went out

down the stairs

out in the sunbaked streets

loitering along

gazing vacantly

he paused at a *bori's* shop, a little wayside stall stuck into the corner of a building, jutting right out on the pavement

knick-knacks, bottles of smuggled-in perfume, little scissors and nail-clippers, key-chains, greeting-cards, cheap cigarette lighters, screw-drivers, boxes of condoms, odds and ends

he paused, hesitating

the skull-capped old *bori*, bushy-eyebrowed and goatee-bearded, a faintly lecherous gleam in his tired eyes, looked him over

"Well? What's it now? Want an FL eh?"

"Eh?" uncomprehendingly. "No, no. Just show me that"

pointing.

"What? Oh that," the *bori* took them down. "They're one anna each, what d'you want them for, eh?"

He bought one. It was one of those toy-cheques: "The Bank Of Peace And Goodwill, Bombay, India, promises to pay the bearer on demand the sum of _____. MAY YOU LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER."

"What'll you do with it, eh?" the *bori* persisted. "How much money're you going to pay to who?"

"A million rupees," he said patiently, very serious, "I'll give them a million rupees, that's what they'll need for a good start in life."

"Who?"

"These two young people of course, they're getting married this evening and I've been invited. They came personally this morning with the invitation. You know I worked for the girl's father fifteen, no twenty-one years three and a half months, then this railway job came along and I had to take it for my old woman. She wanted to come live in Bombay to be close to her people, you know they all live here."

"Why not ask them to give you something now?" the *bori* was bored, he had to attend to some women wanting to buy reels of colored thread

they bought the reels and went

the old man said

"This foreman, he borrowed fifty rupees from me and when I asked him for it he cursed me. He's poisoned the manager against me and so I couldn't go back again—"

he turned away

moved uncertainly down the street, pocketing the toy cheque

turned and came back.

"Well? What's it now?"

"A million rupees," he mumbled. "How many zeros?"

"Come on, come on, give it here, I'll fill it in, you can sign it."

He gave the cheque to the *bori* who wrote in a million rupees, gave the pen to the old man to sign. Hand quavering the signature to spider's scrawl, the old man inked in his name.

"You'll need an envelope. Here."

The *bori* put the cheque in an envelope handed it to him. He turned away again and the *bori* called

"Hey! Hey wait a minute! You've got to write the names on the envelope. You know, to so-and-so with all best wishes for a long and happy married life from et cetera et cetera. Come on, I'll write it for you."

He took the envelope, unscrewed his pen-cap again

"Come on, what's the name?"

"Name? Oh, oh name. I see. Well, no. Don't write the name,

just write—to the bride and bridegroom et cetera et cetera. Write it's from me."

He pocketed the envelope, walked away mumbling to himself.

"You know," he said turning back to the *bori*. "People are so good. Everybody's been so good to me. Thank you."

When he came back it was with an armful of old torn clothes and shoes fit to be thrown away.

"What's that! Where's the money!"

"No money," he said gently, not looking at her, putting the pile on the bed. "They gave this—"

"This! What'll I do with this, make flags and sing the national anthem—"

"Please, please sell it, it'll keep the rent-collector happy and—"

"I'll do no such thing! I'll throw these clothes in his face and tell him you said to do it. You better be here in the evening when he comes or I'll—"

"I'm sorry," he whispered, looking away. "I have to attend a wedding tonight—"

"You have to attend a wedding every night these days, eh! You think you're the leading social figure in Bombay, eh? You old dung-eater you better be here tonight or—"

"I'm sorry. I have to attend a wedding tonight."

She fell on him, beating him till he stumbled and fell to the ground

unhurt, indifferent

capacity to absorb the blunt-axe hacking humiliation long since withered

wells of response run dry

this is life's breath

only this.

"You go to that wedding tonight," she growled, "And you'll not come back in this room again and don't think I'm depending on your relatives' throwaways to pay the rent man. I spoke to my niece and don't think I've been letting her run up behind the staircase every afternoon for nothing, she stays here she eats here and she pays for her keep. Do you do that old man, do you pay for your keep? Don't ask for any food now you'll not get it—"

"No food," he said quickly. "No food. I'm dining out tonight."

"Yes dine out dine out! I'll throw these shoes in your face if you climb these stairs again!"

Since the first week of April there was a wedding taking place almost every evening in some part of Bombay, and by the middle of May the city looked almost as gayly illuminated as it was every year on Republic Day.

Especially Saturday-Sundays.

He wandered down the streets one hand in his coat pocket, clutching the envelope. Boarding a tram he went to Madhav Baug in the densely populated area in the heart of the city. Madhav Baug was a huge Gujerati estate enclosing temples, shops, and halls for marriages and other ceremonies.

He got off the tram

traffic thick congested on the road near the entrance

wealthy *dhoti* clad men in white *kurtas* and caps at the gate chatting

he folded his hands in respectful *namaste* as he entered

smiling deferentially

they greeted him politely

the wedding ceremony was flamboyant, ostentatiously illuminated

a loudspeaker blaring the latest Indian film tunes

sad songs, joyous songs

in slow rhythm fast rhythm

based on classical *raags*

flagrantly copied from rock n' roll

irrespective of the occasion.

He mingled with the guests

smiled politely whenever anyone caught his eye

deflecting gradually towards the flower bedecked *pandal* where the bride and bridegroom were seated.

"Hello there!"

He turned startled

sudden fear spasm clutched his heart

and who was this?

A fat elderly Parsee dressed in white and wearing the black formal headgear of his community was smiling at him.

"Hello. Didn't we meet at yesterday's wedding?"

"Why, yes, yes. I . . . er . . . I didn't quite. . . ."

"My name's Shapurji Pestonji Daruwalla," the man stuck out his hand. "And yours?"

He uttered his name

shaking hands.

"You seem to be well connected with the business community," the man said eyeing his threadbare clothes casually.

"Why yes. One has to . . . you know how it is"

smiling depreciatingly

he moved away

heart thumping

went and shook hands with the bride and groom, handed over the envelope, moved on towards the enclosure where dinner was being served to the guests

not looking back

acutely conscious.

It was a vegetarian meal but the food was good, pure *ghee* of course. They served *masala doodh*, rich creamy milk mixed with saffron, crushed almonds, *pista* and cashew nuts, to drink with the meal. He ate two plates of ice cream before moving towards the entrance to go out.

"Hey there! Hey!"

sick, he turned

the same man.

"Yes?"

"Here! Here, have a cigar! Do you good!"

"Why . . . why" relief overwhelming relief. "Thanks, thank you."

He took the cigar.

"Here, sit down and smoke. You'll enjoy it more."

"No. I, er, must go. I'll smoke this later, before sleeping. Thanks. Have to attend elsewhere too and—"

"What! Another wedding!"

He smiled modestly.

The man stared at him as he moved away.

At the gate his departure was impeded by groups of children playing with the gas balloons they were distributing along with sweets to the guests.

"Uncle, uncle!" a little girl was tugging at his sleeve. "Here! Have a balloon!"

she looked so pretty in her pigtails

it hurt him, breaking through the rusted, walled-in remembrances

then the wall was whole again.

He took the string in his hand but it escaped him and the balloon floated upwards and out of sight.

"Oh not that way! Here, let me tie it to your finger."

she tied it.

"Thank you. Thank you," he bowed. "I'll give it to my grandson"

he mumbled, unable to see properly

hurried out in the street

putting the cigar in his pocket

went walking all the way to Chowpatty Beach, the balloon high up in the air on its few feet of string

quite exhilirated about it

because people turned curiously to look at him

wonderful, to be looked at, not away from

so he smiled at them too

bowed a little

happiness, stray wayward-breeze like, you perceived only after it touched you and just passed by

the beach was crowded, Sunday-evening promenaders parading up-down, girls-boys holding hands furtively, middle-class families, crowds converging on the further side of the beach near the swimming-pool where the municipal authorities had licensed the *bhel-puri-wallahs* to carry on their business of feeding the hungry and most people never ate home Sunday nights no, they paraded on Chowpatty Beach, their children playing in the dirty, paper-littered sands, then by eight o'clock they drifted across to the *bhel-puri* stalls

gorged themselves on *batata-puri* with plenty of curds and sweet tamarind chutney, *pani-puri, bhel, dahi-wada, chana-batata.*

He sat down on one of the benches on the pavement. They were spaced facing alternately, one towards the sea, the next facing roadwards, the next seafacing, the next roadwards. He found a bench facing the traffic-crowded highway

watching the beautiful limousines as they came speeding along Marine Drive went zooming past him on up Walkeshwar Road to Malabar Hill, where big business and the ministers lived.

"Excuse me."

The man stopped, looked at him.

"May I? A light please?"

The man gave him a matchbox.

He tried to light the cigar, but so many years now

three matchsticks wasted.

"Here," the man said impatiently. "You'll finish my matchbox. Let me."

He drew in the first puff

stretched out contented

a good meal that

even though yesterday's was so heavy

it upset his stomach not used to rich food now like in the old days

broke out coughing as he inhaled

bent forward in racking spasms

something caught under his chest he clutched at it painfully, feeling sick.

He lay back again, wafted away on delicate giddiness from the inhaling

band blaring forth a hit tune from an Indian film

a procession came by

at the head the smartly uniformed band, playing as it marched

behind them the bearers of the huge lamps

then the crowds of well-dressed people

and then the bridegroom mounted on a white horse, his face hidden by the *sehra* of flowers hung about his head

and here goes another wedding procession, the groom on his way to the appointed place to wed the bride, how wonderful to see him do it like in the old days, with all that pomp and ceremony, otherwise look at these youngsters today, rushing off to the Registrar of Civil Marriages

he opened his eyes to watch, a slight smile unconscious on his lips

the gas balloon still standing erect at the end of the string tied to his finger

wish I could follow the procession, see the lad through, most important day of his life

very happy now not consciously but as though perceived hazily from another plane

Sunday evening on Chowpatty Beach and people getting married well into June when the monsoons'd break and the marriages'd peter out and stop till November and then the city would become bright warm friendly happy contented again

floated away from the self

twin-eye-windows closed

he lay his head back against the bench.

"*Pitaji, pitaji,*" the boy whispered. "Can I?"

"No, no," his father said gruffly, pushing the boy ahead. "Move on. There's your mother there, go to her."

The man moved on to his wife

the boy slipped back

paused uncertainly by the old man.

"*Mooch wale chacha,*" he said uncertainly. "May I have that balloon? It's only for children, please give it to me."

Silence

"I'll take it?" the boy whispered leaning close to the man's face

saw the smile

"Alright, thanks."

He undid the string, took the balloon

the man's arm fell limp over the bench-arm till the fingertips grazed the pavement

a woman screamed

confusion

the boy's father yelling for him, pushing through the crowd

sick with fear the boy turned to run

"I didn't do anything!" he cried. "I didn't do anything!"

the gas balloon slipped from his fingers

in an instant went soaring up higher higher till its globular patch of crimson was lost in the black sheen of night

people crowded round the bench

a couple of police *havaldars* came pushing through.

"My balloon," the boy wailed as his parents dragged him quickly

across the street, hailing a *gharrywallah* to stop his hack victoria, they didn't want to get mixed up in anything

"My balloon. He gave me the balloon and now I've lost it, I've lost it."

Confusion on the pavement now

they could hear the tin-pot band leading the marriage procession playing "he's a jolly good fellow" as the *gharry* drove away.

At the Funeral in the Rain

By NEIL WEISS

We're here to witness rain,
play the earth,
catch it if we can,
hold up the face,
say thanks a million to the drops,
and, now we're free to be clean,
we cannot count the drops of rain
though across some street they stop
just short of lips.

The coffin murmurs: Set me down,
earth is torn with burial of the rain . . .

We hold up face, eyes and lips
to catch it, but it slips.

NEIL WEISS's poems have appeared here often, most recently in the Winter '59-'60 issue. His second volume of verse, *Origin of a Design*, won the Charioteer Poetry Award for 1960, and a third is now ready for publication.

■ BOOKS

A Preface to James Purdy's Malcolm

By DAVID DAICHES

The opening sentence won me over at once. It has the beautifully mater-of-fact clarity of a fairy tale (complete with the reference to gold), the stark realism of the documentary, and the provocative deadpan of the satire. "In front of one of the most palatial hotels in the world, a very young man was accustomed to sit on a bench which, when the light fell in a certain way, shone like gold." It is as devastating in its confident completeness as the famous opening of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife." Yet what worlds apart these two openings are! Jane Austen is talking to an audience she knows about a society she knows, in the confident assurance that the patterns of that society, treated with the proper kind of irony, yield valuable public truths about the relationship between private impulse and public convention. James Purdy is looking at an aspect of familiar American society with a gaze of such disturbing steadiness that the familiar becomes bizarre under his (and our) eyes and the real turns into the fantastic. At first one is tempted to call *Malcolm* a symbolic fantasy, but—though I dare say some critics will find little difficulty in explaining the symbols to us—the more we read the book the more we come to realize that the characters and events are not symbolic of something or of some things: they are *themselves*, and their haunting comic mystery derives from their being so very much themselves. We do not look through them to find a satire on America: or rather, we can and do look through them and find that satire, but that is not what the book is finally seen as leading us to do. The

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DAVID DAICHES, the well-known British critic, last reviewed a book for us in our Winter '59-'60 issue. The present introduction will appear in the next edition of *Malcolm* published by Farrar, Straus & Cudahy.

quiet precision of Purdy's style deploys the characters and events before us with such steady conviction that in the end we do not look beyond them but *at* them, and watch the real become the fantastic and the fantastic become the real until this beautifully engineered confusion of categories distills its own kind of satiric humor.

The hotel is not the most palatial in the world, but *one of the most palatial*; the man is not just a conventional "young man" but a *very young man*, and the suggestion is that the author knows exactly who he is (though we don't); and the bench only "shone like gold" *when the light fell in a certain way*. Qualifications imply truth, suggest accuracy. The impression is that the author is not writing a novel, but writing what he knows. The wealth of invention is deliberately disguised as what happens to have occurred. We are never allowed to see the author in control of his materials (and this, of course, is proof of his supreme control); the cool inconsequence of the narrative—the inconsequence of real life with the impression of fantasy and the suggestion of vast but always escaping meanings—is achieved by the total suppression of the narrator. Here indeed is Joyce's ideal: "The artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond his handiwork, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails." Yet Purdy's method is no more Joyce's than it is Jane Austen's: Joyce achieves a level of fantasy in *Ulysses* through exploiting reverie and periodically dissolving the surface realism of the action into the dream world of one of the characters, while Purdy is the deadpan reporter throughout. When he does have to record a character's impression, he objectifies that impression by such a device as the use of "one" (rather than "I" or "he"): "Malcolm was not only astonished to see that Kermit Raphaelson was a midget but that he looked quite handsome and clever, and differed from any other young man only in the matter of size: one merely felt one was looking at him with the wrong end of the eye-piece." Note what is happening here. A simple truth is being told—for is it not a simple truth that midgets differ from other people only in size?—yet it is made to seem odd, because of the hero's matter-of-factly recorded astonishment at his observation. This is one of the uses to which Purdy puts Malcolm's youth and dumbness and inexperience: he observes everything freshly, is quite incapable of distinguishing between the routine and the extraordinary, so that by the end the reader is persuaded that the routine and the extraordinary are indeed but different aspects of the same thing. The reader is persuaded of even more than that: he comes to feel that the two categories "routine" and "extraordinary" are meaningless. Why shouldn't a young man whose father has disappeared sit on a bench

outside a palatial hotel until he is accosted by an astrologer who gives him the address of a Negro undertaker named Estel Blanc? It is amazing how quickly we are trapped into taking Malcolm's view of everything: "But what would I have done . . . if you had given me up?" Malcolm wondered almost to himself. "I mean, what would I have done about addresses!" Malcolm, and the reader too by this time, takes it for granted that getting more addresses from a casually met astrologer is important; indeed, he cannot now imagine how he could have managed without them. It is all absurd, but by now we cannot tell why, and so the whole category of absurdity has to disappear. It is most artfully done.

It is Purdy's inventiveness in *Malcolm* that impresses the reader most of all. But it is not the inventiveness of a science-fiction writer or an ingenious contriver of suspense plots: it is a richer kind of inventiveness, for it springs from that special kind of literary imagination that can move out of the realm of normal probability without diminishing in any degree the atmosphere of simple human reality which surrounds the whole story. There are, it is true, moments when we feel that the fairy-tale note is going to be sustained at the expense of the realistic and the contemporary, but these moments are always followed by a piece of devastating particularity which prevents us from soaring away into a world of mere extravagance or fable. When Malcolm first visits Madame Girard at "The Chateau," he is taken up by a footman in a green and gold elevator and when he emerges from it to find the appropriate door it has on it a message, written on thick letter paper: "MALCOLM: YOU ARE EXPECTED: MADAME GIRARD." This is indeed the kind of message that the lucky youngest son might find on entering an enchanted palace in a fairy tale, or that Alice might find in Wonderland: but we are at once brought out of that realm by learning (from a young man with a flushed face who carries a tall iced drink) that "Madame Girard is demanding settlement from her husband." The scene that follows is exquisitely comic, and it is nothing like a fairy tale at all. It combines the sordidness of the contemporary marital quarrel with the rich absurdity that derives from the confrontation of Malcolm's preposterous innocence with Madame Girard's histrionic egotism.

> "As you may not know," Malcolm began, addressing himself to everyone present, and still employing his loud voice, "Mr. Cox, the well-known astrologer, is introducing me to all of his friends this year in the hopes that I may be a little less inclined to be lonely."
>
> "That follows," Madame Girard tasted her vodka loudly.
>
> "You must drink a *great* deal, Madame Girard," Malcolm said, a note of genuine worry in his voice, and there were again cries of laughter,

but greatly muffled this time, while Mr. Girard bit his pipe and looked away toward a row of vases all filled with fresh garnet roses. . . .

"I think you are intoxicated, madame," Malcolm said. . . .

"Do you realize in whose home you are?" Madame Girard said in a breathless voice. And in still lower tones: "And do you realize who *I* am?"

Malcolm nodded, and said: "This is the third place I've visited at Mr. Cox's request"—and he turned to face everybody in the room—"but I can't say it is the most pleasant or comfortable of the three."

Madame Girard sipping her vodka (and why is she "Madame"? The title is part of the deliberately unexplained flamboyance of the character), confronted by the puzzled Malcolm, in a room where "at least ten young men were all seated on identical straight-backed chairs," when she is in the process of threatening to "take proceedings" against her husband, is both absolutely absurd and absolutely convincing. It is both Alice facing the Red Queen and a valid distortion of contemporary reality. When, irritated by her husband's remark about Malcolm's father and by Malcolm's warm response, she denies that Malcolm's father ever existed, Malcolm's response is superbly described:

"That's . . . that's . . . blasphemy . . . or a thing above it!" Malcolm cried, standing up, while Mr. Girard went up to him and attempted to say something quietly in his ear. "And this is the first time where I have ever attended a . . . a . . . *meeting*," Malcolm chose this word after looking at all the young men on chairs—"a meeting where the person in charge was . . . drunk."

The reader's bewilderment in finding himself in these strange surroundings has its correlative in Malcolm's innocent and sometimes puzzled responses: if a large number of young men are seated on identical chairs, a party does become, in a sense, a meeting; and when a hostess becomes "the person in charge," this means that we are not quite clear what kind of social occasion this is. Malcolm speaks for our bewilderment; yet he is not bewildered. He is not experienced enough to recognize eccentricity: if he calls on a couple he has not met before and finds them to be a stout blonde female and her midget husband who immediately begin to quarrel violently, he sits down and joins in the conversation without any indication that he has found himself in a never-never-land. And indeed why should we think that it *is* a never-never-land? No single element in it—a stout blonde, a midget, a quarrel between husband and wife—is in the least bit improbable. This is true of the whole story: take it item by item and it is in large part a story of our

familiar world, but take it in its total narrative movement and it is fantastic.

There is one moment in the novel when a more conventional sort of reality seems to be taking over: this is the scene where the sorely tried Girard repudiates Madame Girard and tells her that he is going to marry Laureen Raphaelson (the stout blonde). Madame Girard takes a pistol from a cabinet:

> She half-leveled the pistol at him.
>
> "I am divorcing you in order to marry Laureen Raphaelson."
>
> Madame Girard raised the hand with the pistol like one who may command an entire army to extinguish itself, and then letting her hand drop before she gave the omnipotent gesture, she exclaimed weak and without humor: "The wife of that midget."
>
> "We have found one another," he said, picking up the pistol which she had let fall on to the floor, and placing it on top of a reading desk.

But the cliché, "we have found one another," used in this particular context restores the scene to bizarre ironic comedy and prepares us for the quiet extravagance of the conclusion of the episode:

> "My name! You cannot take it. Take the money, the victory, but leave me as I was: Madame Girard."
>
> "Fate has already moved. You speak as the melancholy young woman should have spoken on the lagoon so long ago."
>
> "Girard Girard," she pleaded and she went down on her knees to him.
>
> "It has been a week of melodrama," he said, fatigued. "A lifetime ot melodrama."
>
> He buttoned his great coat.
>
> "Your shoes are so beautifully shined," she wept.
>
> Suddenly she kissed his shoes.
>
> "Leave me what I was," she begged. "Leave me *Madame Girard*."
>
> She saw the shoes withdraw from her embrace, and a moment later she heard the closing of the massive outside door.

There is a psychological cunning about the embracing of the shoes. In moments of emotional crisis one does find oneself fixing one's attention on some such detail as somebody's beautifully shined shoes and it is quite plausible that one would associate such a detail with the whole personality of the shoes' owner. But psychologically plausible though the situation is, it becomes also bizarre by the way it is presented to us. " 'Your shoes are so beautifully shined,' she wept" accurately reflects a genuine kind of shift of attention and association of ideas, but the articulation of the

sentence in this way at this moment is made to appear comically absurd. Again, "She saw the shoes withdraw from her embrace" is a way of putting it which emphasizes the whole irrational absurdity of the situation: but it is style, not the mere events, which achieves this effect.

Madame Girard's concern to be left at least with her name is bound up with the importance of names in the novel. The name "Girard" sounds French: Mr. Girard (he is not "Monsieur" but "Mister") is simply "Girard Girard," first name and surname identical, and this seems to emphasize a certain lack of individuality in his character. Madame Girard, on the other hand, is all histrionics, a circus figure, whose "Madame" suggests a fortune teller, a gipsy, a prima donna, a temperamental European performer. Estel Blanc turns out to be a Negro (though "blanc" means "white") and Malcolm, who oddly enough has only seen how dark he is "on observing him closely," has difficulty in choosing a polite term to indicate his awareness of his color:

> ". . . And I do like you, Estel, and I am willing to just forget you were an undertaker or a mortician or a . . . a . . . *Abyssinian*, or *anything!*"
>
> "Oh, dear God!," Estel implored, and he immediately got up from the chair he had been conversing in, and began hurriedly pacing up and down the room, repeating somewhat religious exclamations of displeasure.

The stilted, over-formalized phrase, "somewhat religious exclamations of displeasure," has a special kind of comic effect; it fixes the scene with a certain deliberate and formal objectivity. Malcolm's speech is often preposterously formal: this is part of his innocence, of the simple acceptance with which he faces new experiences. When, going to his second "address," he meets Laureen Raphaelson, who tells him that she and her husband "are headed for the divorce courts," Malcolm gravely replies: "Divorce courts seem entirely out of my range of experience. But I am sorry you are headed for them." Or again, consider the implications of the fact that so many of the people whom Malcolm meets want to keep him or adopt him or (in the final case) marry him. The rich and powerful Girard Girard himself, as well as Madame Girard, are anxious to have Malcolm stay with them, and Girard Girard actually calls on Malcolm at his hotel in order to put the proposition to him. He explains this extraordinary visit to Kermit the midget and Mr. Cox:

> "What happened," Malcolm said without any further delay, "is that Girard Girard came to see me in person last night, at midnight."
>
> Both Mr. Cox and Kermit were too thunderstruck to reply immediately.

When not even Mr. Cox could bring himself to comment on this intelligence, Kermit, after some struggle, brought out: "Do you realize the honor which has been paid to you, Malcolm?"

"Honor?" Malcolm replied, seriously trying to understand now.

"How could he realize, *fully* or at *all*!" Mr. Cox said, flushed and irritable.

"Malcolm," Kermit exclaimed, going over to where the boy was seated, and taking his hand vigorously into his, like one who is to communicate with the deaf and dumb, "Girard Girard is a billionaire, a maker of presidents, a friend of royalty—a MAGNATE!"

"A friend of royalty?" Malcolm caught at this one phrase.

"Wined and dined by crowned heads, an African explorer, and a poet!" . . .

"It seems that both Madame Girard and Girard Girard feel they have to have me for their very own," Malcolm said, and he felt that with this sentence he had told the whole interesting story. . . .

Malcolm continually reduces the extraordinary to the cliché, that is, to the formulations of those who can only cope with reality by seeing it in stereotyped and stock terms. The Girards want to have Malcolm "for their very own" (a cliché from popular love songs) and this essentially meaningless explanation is accepted by Malcolm as covering the situation. When the explanation is received in silence by Mr. Cox and Kermit, "Malcolm added, by way of elucidation: 'They love me, I guess, the Girards.'" Mr. Cox, who at least knows the mere verbalism of such an explanation, understandably replies (puncturing Malcolm's naive solemnity with his slang), "Completely incredible—the whole shebang!"

The shifts in verbal style that go on throughout the novel constitute one of the most remarkable qualities and are responsible for some of its most extraordinary effects. Sometimes there is a kind of lunatic parody, as in the words of the song that the mysterious Cora Naldi sings in the funeral parlour:

"And is it so that you were there?
And is it so you were?
And is it so that while you were
Cherries were your ware?
Pale cherries were your ware?"

Beside this song we might put that sung by Melba when Malcolm is first brought to her by the casually encountered motor-cyclist:

"When you said goodby, dark daddy,
Did you know I had not yet said hello?"

In this final section of the novel, language is used with a more specifically ironic intent than earlier:

> "You *is* a contemporary?" the motorcyclist asked with a sudden desire for confirmation.
>
> Malcolm was about to answer, but the driver had already turned away from him, headed for the door of the roadhouse, and said: "Melba will know anyhow if you is or isn't."

Within a few minutes of his having met Melba, she asks him: "Do you really care for me?" and he replies "I do, Melba"—and, so far as he knows, really means it. The conversation continues:

> "I've never been so quickly surprised, or so quickly happy!" Melba began, but at a look from Gus she began complaining again: "You begrudge me happiness, don't you? Answer me, don't you? You begrudge me this tiny tiny bit of happiness in my life of pettiness and struggle. . . ."
>
> "Melba, honey, happiness is the last thing I *be*-grudge you," Gus told her. "But I don't want you to rush into matrimony this here time. Think of how many other old times you done got stung. Think of the courts, Melba, honey."
>
> "He begrudges me," Melba explained to Malcolm.

Later Melba tells Gus: "I'll never forget you for having brought Malcolm to me, dearest. Don't ever let me forget this great favor you have committed for me . . ." The misuse of the word *committed* suddenly sums up the whole distorted quality of this part of the novel's action. But Malcolm's receptive innocence takes it all as he finds it, and he happily accepts his engagement to Melba and the promise of marriage the following Tuesday. It is Gus's job to "mature him up" by Tuesday. Innocence has many attractions, but total sexual innocence clearly won't do if he has to marry the demanding Melba: so he learns about sex in a brothel. ("I did just like you said, Gus," he told the motor-cyclist. "All the way through three times!" But the Gus to whom he proudly tells of his sexual maturing is, though Malcolm doesn't realize it, dead.) Malcolm emerges from his "maturing" as innocent as ever except he knows what to do about sex. Sexual potency and the innocence of youth now work together: Malcolm has now in fact nothing else at all but these two things. The result was literally fatal: he died (if he really did die, and if there ever was a real Malcolm to die) of innocence and sexual exhaustion.

> Too young for the army, too unprepared to continue his schooling and become a scientist, too untrained for ordinary work—what was left for

> him but marriage? And in his case, marriage supplied him with everything that he had up to now lacked, and also gave him his unique way of leaving the world, in which he had perhaps never belonged (as some people said) in the first place.

This is the only time we hear the author's voice; it is a disguised and parodic voice, and its summing up of Malcolm's life and death has the earnestly committed tones of the conventionally serious moralizing novelist and so makes the ironic absurdity of the actual statement peculiarly comic. "Too untrained for ordinary work—what was left for him but marriage?" This daft remark echoes in the mind, taking on ever odder meanings.

It is difficult to sum up the comic qualities of *Malcolm*. The novel creates its own kind of comedy as it moves, partly through the confronting of the uncomprehendingly polite Malcolm with a crazy sequence of characters and situations, partly by the elements of parody and irony in those characters and situations themselves, partly by deliberate shifts in style, and always by the shifting vitality of the dialogue. The more one reads the novel, the more one discovers new ironies and absurdities in the dialogue. "But when all is said and done, Malcolm, kiddy, you are not in our class. O.K.? I hope I do not offend." The words of Eloisa Brace the portrait painter to Malcolm as she sends him away to Girard Girard, with their modulation of four different kinds of clichés—popular argument, affectionate diminutive, pseudo-sociological metaphor, ordinary colloquial slang, tried pomposity—provide a microcosm of the range of stylistic ironies in the book. It is a very funny book, and whatever else the careful reader will find in it, he will find the delight of truly original comedy.

Panning the Planners

The Death and Life of Great American Cities. By Jane Jacobs. Random House, 1961. $5.95.

Jane Jacobs has written a myopic book about cities. She apparently thinks it is the ultimate denouement, for she has composed it in a smug style that dares the reader to take a couple of jabs at her data and a right cross to her thesis.

In its present form, the book is useful only to *laissez-faire* extremists who will delight in quoting selected passages from it, and to behaviorists

who can quantify it as an example of how inept introspective scholarship in the social sciences may become. For all its faults, however, and they are both substantive and procedural, it proves one thing: Mrs. Jacobs has within her the capacity to produce a very great book, a very important book, a work that could offer solutions to a whole range of urban dilemmas.

Mrs. Jacobs tells us at the outset that she does not like city planners, or rather, she does not like what city planners plan. Since she is an editor of *Architectural Forum*, one would expect from her a reasonably operative definition of what a planner is, what he does, and what city planning has come to mean in the United States. No such good fortune. One may search the volume from buckram to buckram without learning anything more about planners than that they are responsible for most of the ills of the modern city, and that they are trying to foist off their sinister schemes on a completely gullible and unsuspecting public. We do learn that they have accomplices. The other bad guys in this piece are the mortgage bankers. They are, we are told, just as ominous for cities as the planners, but a good deal more stupid. They use the planners' ideas—no originality, you know.

And what is it the planners plan? Here, at least, we are not left to drift for ourselves. American city planners of the sixties are really trying to turn their cities into the Garden City of Ebeneezer Howard and *La Ville Radieuse* of Le Corbusier. Is there a difference? Not much. The two seem to be used interchangeably by Mrs. Jacobs, who keeps peppering these rascals without so much as a stray shot in the direction of John Nolen or Camillo Sitte.

Since this is not a history of city planning, one should not take Mrs. Jacobs to task too severely for an inadequate rendering of the ideas and the purposes of Howard and Le Corbusier, and particularly for her failure to make clear to her readers the specific problems which these two planners were trying to solve. What is assailable is her clear and repeated charge that American city planners are immersed in the values of these earlier creators, that they have no originality, and that they are trying to fashion every American city according to the precepts and principles of these two ancients.

Beyond their addiction to such subversive French and British influences, planners, in Mrs. Jacobs' book, are all dreamers, schemers, and social redeemers. Take, for example, this lead into her chapter on "The Uses of Sidewalks: Assimilating Children."

> Among the superstitions of planning and housing is a fantasy about the transformation of children. It goes like this: A population of children is condemned to play on the city streets. These pale and rickety children,

> in their sinister moral environment, are telling each other canards about sex, sniggering evilly and learning new forms of corruption as efficiently as if they were in reform school. This situation is called "the moral and physical toll taken of our youth by the streets," sometimes it is called simply "the gutter."

The reader of scholarly bent will search in vain for the footnote referring him to the planner or planners who teach that sidewalks are virulent. Nor does one find documented evidence, in this passionately written work, of such statements as:

> The pseudoscience of city planning and its companion, the art of city design, have not yet broken with the specious comfort of wishes, familiar superstitions, oversimplifications, and symbols, and have not yet embarked upon the adventure of probing the real world.

Having ignored the fact that American city planning at this stage of its development is highly pragmatic and functional, Mrs. Jacobs can sweep through the rest of the volume, discovering problems which "planners," whoever they may be, have failed to recognize or solve. Planners, since they do everything in a wrongheaded fashion, even have wrongheaded telephone conversations. Somehow it seems improbable that the following exchange ever took place, but Mrs. Jacobs has put quotes around it, so it must have happened. She was in the North End of Boston one day, she relates, and became curious about the source of private money which had been used to help rehabilitate the area. So she went to a telephone and called a Boston "planner" she knew.

> "Why in the world are you down in the North End?" he said. "Money? Why, no money or work has gone into the North End. Nothing's going on down there. Eventually, yes, but not yet. That's a slum!"
>
> "It doesn't seem like a slum to me," I said.
>
> "Why, that's the worst slum in the city. It has two hundred and seventy-five dwelling units to the net acre! I hate to admit we have anything like that in Boston, but it's a fact."
>
> "Do you have any other figures on it?" I asked.
>
> "Yes, funny thing. It has among the lowest delinquency, disease and infant mortality rates in the city. It also has the lowest ratio of rent to income in the city. Boy, are those people getting bargains. Let's see . . . the child population is just about average for the city, on the nose. The death rate is low, 8.8 per thousand, against the average city rate of 11.2. The TB death rate is very low, less than 1 per ten thousand, can't understand it, it's lower even than Brookline's. In the old days the North End used to be the city's worst spot for tuberculosis, but all that has changed. Well, they must be strong people. Of course it's terrible slum."

"You should have more slums like this," I said. "Don't tell me there are plans to wipe this out. You ought to be down here learning as much as you can from it."

"I know how you feel," he said. "I often go down there myself just to walk around the streets and feel that wonderful, cheerful street life. Say, what you ought to do, you ought to come back and go down in the summer if you think it's fun now. You'd be crazy about it in summer. But of course we have to rebuild it eventually. We've got to get those people off the streets."

So much for planners. Now, what about the real world?

There is, despite its flamboyant character, a real world to be discovered in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. It is the real world of the big city which Mrs. Jacobs has the good sense to distinguish from the medium-sized city. Her book is not about Toledo or Akron. It is about New York and Chicago and Los Angeles—but especially New York. More particularly, it is about what Mrs. Jacobs has seen, what she thinks she has seen, and what conclusions she has reached, based upon her own observations. This is not a book which depends for its facts upon other people's interviews, and in this regard it has a refreshing vitality reminiscent of Samuel Lubell's writing in the field of politics.

Some of what she reports is not only trite but utterly misleading. It is obvious that she has a deep-seated aversion to all sorts of "planned" housing projects, public and private. If we are to believe her, all inhabitants of projects are cold, heartless, anti-social (she has never been in the laundry room) and, if rich, vulgar, while those who live in "houses" are by definition kindly, integrating, co-operative, responsible, and tasteful. We are given to know this by a single example of how mean housing project tenants are, and by many examples of the warmth, generosity, and affection of those who live in privately owned and unplanned quarters.

A good deal of what is wrong with projects, she says, is that they are planned by planners who have their own ideas about what is good for people (grass), and no idea of what people want or need. Children do not like to play in large open areas, they prefer sidewalks and stoops, we are told. (Last summer when I walked through the central mall of a large housing project in Buffalo, N.Y., I began counting children playing, but lost count at something over two hundred because they were moving too fast.) Of course, children enjoy a variety of planes and forms for active play, which is why public housing architect Hugh Moore, Jr., leaves some excavated rock near his projects. There are Indians lurking behind those rocks almost any time of day.

If one can get past her likes (small retail stores, especially bookstores, old houses that have been fixed up, ubiquitous shopkeepers, street poli-

ticians, neighborhoods of mixed use, exotic food, and petitions to city council) and her dislikes (any sort of project, large chain stores, suburban life, automobiles, most parks, modern architecture, and, of course, planners), one does discover that Mrs. Jacobs sometimes has something to say that is worth listening to.

Her analysis of what makes a viable city district ought to be read by anyone who has visions of jackhammering some downtown streets and turning them into a landscaped mall. Sociologists may want to jot down a few notes on what makes a sidewalk safe, what makes a neighborhood secure. Her recapitulation of the "unslumming" process of Back-of-the-Yards in Chicago and North End in Boston is worth the attention of anyone, bankers and contractors included, who has been caught up in the movement to "rehabilitate" blighted areas. Her defense of the short as against the long city block will win no friends amongst those who have to figure the costs for street repaving and snow removal, but it is worth the attention of those with an interest or an investment in urban real estate, both residential and commercial. Finally, her plea for diversity of use or function within the city must be given heed by everyone from responsible city planners, mayors, managers, and industrial development committees to the rank and file citizen who is always a tax payer and who inevitably has the largest stake in seeing to it that cities are developed according to his needs and desires.

But to suggest, if ever so briefly, that Mrs. Jacobs has such likes and dislikes, such concerns and objectives, is to suggest that she has values. And how does she expect that her values are going to be accepted and integrated into the complex process of city building? Why, through planning, of course. The sober truth is that Jane Jacobs is a city planner after all. Only she would do it differently.

"Consider," she asks us, "the kind of goals at which city planning must begin to aim, if the object is to plan for city vitality." What are the goals?

> Planning for vitality must stimulate and catalyze the greatest possible range and quantity of diversity among uses and among people throughout each district of a big city; this is the underlying foundation of city economic strength, social vitality and magnetism.

Spoken like a true resident of Greenwich Village. Diversity should be the ultimate quality of cities, and Mrs. Jacobs offers us the indispensable conditions for the attainment of this end. They are: city districts serving more than one primary function; short city blocks; city districts that mingle buildings of varying age and condition; a dense concentration of

people, including people who are there because of residence. "The necessity for these four conditions," she says, "is the most important point this book has to make."

But what if people are unhappy with the idea of civic diversity as the key to urban development? What if they insist upon living in socially and economically stratified communities and neighborhoods? What if they don't care to intermix their residential neighborhoods with picture frame shops, coffee houses, studios, corner groceries, small factories, commercial establishments, and, oh yes, bookstores? What if they prefer the bang and bustle (and the economy) of the supermarket to the intimacy, fragrance, and higher prices of the Italian fruit market? Are they to be denied their way of life, however indecent, short-sighted, and clearly wrong they must be in the eyes of Mrs. Jacobs who chooses to live in an old house in an old neighborhood in an old city where one can simply wallow in bookstores?

Somewhere, Jane Jacobs had missed the point of modern American city planning. It would be very hard to prove, and she fails to do so, that our civic planning is oriented toward the city beautiful concepts of an earlier generation, or that its philosophy is simply the outgrowth of ideas to be found in the writing of Howard or Le Corbusier. Instances of such thinking can be found, and Mrs. Jacobs has gone to the trouble to ferret them out. What she apparently refuses to see, however, is that American city planning has been infused with a democratic spirit which compels it to be pragmatic and programmatic in its approach. Planners throughout the country, by and large, do not spend their nights tossing upon their pallets in anguish trying to figure out how to con the citizens for whom they work into accepting their ideas for a solution of all urban ills. For one thing, the chief executives of most big cities are far too bright, far too well trained in politics to allow them to get away with anything as conspiratorial as all that. Planners are answerable public servants who, to put it bluntly, generally are not of fascist mentality.

Most city planners consider it their first responsibility to find out what a community wants to be, to learn what people want in their urban environment, to ascertain the public goals of the city. They are specialists in digging out data upon which the negotiations of civic development can proceed. Some may even have a particular knack for articulating alternatives. But they are not given to superimposing their own values upon the values of the community, of substituting their personal goals for the goals of the body politic. In big cities, they would not get away with it for very long even if they tried.

Nor are planning professionals dreamers or social tinkerers, as Mrs. Jacobs would have us believe. On the other hand, there are moments when we might be inclined to think she is exactly that. During the course of one rather sensible chapter in which she outlines the faults of federally subsidized, low-income housing programs, she projects a scheme for federal subsidy to the tenant himself with the physical housing supply to be provided through private investment, a system of guaranteed-rent contruction, as she calls it. Then she adds:

> Previously, I mentioned two conditions which it would be necessary to require of owners in return for the guarantees given them: The buildings must go within designated neighborhoods and sometimes in a designated spot; and in most cases it would be required that tenants be selected from among applicants currently living within some area, or along some street, or in some group of buildings designated.

No one would rightly accuse her of indulging in an extreme form of social engineering on the basis of such a statement, but if she has not cast the first stone, she has at least joined in the barrage.

The great pity about the book is that the author felt she had to indulge in so much vituperation about planners, had to include so many cheap tricks of showmanship, had to invent so many unlikely stories to prove her point, had to stack the deck, had to set up straw men to topple. Mrs. Jacobs has obviously spent hour after hour in observation of, and thought about, life in the city. In many respects she is a sharp observer, and most of her theories are mature, capable of withstanding serious examination and discussion without the unnecessary flying buttress of irrational hyperbole.

One hopes that Jane Jacobs writes another book, a serious book about cities. The sooner the better.

Lafayette College —Paul A. Pfretzschner

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